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THE CHURCH, THE GOSPEL, AND WAR

A Report of the
General Conference Peace Study Conference

Held at the Eden Mennonite Church near Moundridge, Kansas
April 10 and 11, 1953

Sponsored by
Board of Christian Service
General Conference Mennonite Church
722 Main, Newton, Kansas

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Background for This Conference

This "Eden Conference" can not be fully understood without the larger context of the "Winona Conference" held in the fall of 1950 and the "Detroit Conference" of the preceding Spring. And more than that, one needs to sense the Spirit of God at work in the Church. Inasmuch as Christian men and women have given themselves to a biblical, realistic wrestling with problems in an attitude of love, the Holy Spirit has been most evident.

Delegate representatives of many Christian church peace groups gathered at Detroit for a wide array of topics dealing with church and war. In a sense the Mennonites there felt pressed for answers and more specific social implications of their belief than they were prepared to give. As a result came the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Study Conference at Winona Lake, Indiana, with delegate representation from various Mennonite bodies. (Valuable reports of this conference are still available from MCC, Akron, Pennsylvania, for $1.50.)

The Winona Conference deeply rewarding in itself, nevertheless caused many of the General Conference to feel that the General Conference must seek to clarify its own peace thinking in the context of our Conference as it is.

A meeting of all district peace committees of the General Conference in the fall of 1951 recommended a "little Winona", and the annual meeting of the Board of Christian Service that same fall in Winnipeg authorized a Conference on "The Gospel, the Church, and War". A year later in Newton a preliminary peace study conference group representing most of the boards endorsed such a conference and suggested its main focus and organization.

That same fall, 1952, the Board of Christian Service made definite plans for this conference for April of 1953. The executive Committee with much help from other peace committee members outlined the program, asked for district representatives and arranged for pooling of district delegate expenses. Of the pooled cost the districts paid half and the Board of Christian Service the remainder. Thus each district was urged and helped financially to have representatives proportionate to their total district membership. To be of most help for our total General Conference it was felt necessary to get as widely a representative and balanced a group as possible for this Eden Conference.

Prepared papers presented at the conference served as the basis for discussions. Delegates were divided into four georgraphically representative groups and the Western District guests formed a fifth group. These groups remained the same throughout to make for continuity of thought and more intimate fellowship. Recorders took notes which were then summarized by one person as explained later in this report.

Elmer Ediger
General Secretary
Board of Christian Service

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

District Delegates according to membership chosen by the District Peace Committees.

Delegates-at-large chosen by the Board of Christian Service.

Program Committee work has been done by members of the Board of Christian Service and others invited to meetings at Chicago and Newton.

Co-Chairmen of the Conference: Albert M. Gaeddert
Elmer M. Ediger

Findings Committee - Elmer Neufeld, Chairman, and the recorders for discussion groups.

Committee on Statement to the Congregations - Don Smucker, Chairman
Harley Stucky
H.T. Klaassen
H.B. Schmidt

Chairmen and Recorders for Discussion Groups:

	Chairman	Recorder
Group A.	Walter Gering - - - -	Maynard Shelly
Group B.	Loris Habegger - - - -	David Habegger
Group C.	E.G. Kaufman - - - -	Ernst Harder
Group D.	P.K. Regier - - - -	Menno Schrag
Group E.	E.J. Miller - - - - Eldon Graber	Cornelius Dyck

Division of Delegates into Discussion Groups.

Group A.

Walter Gering, Chairman
Maynard Shelly, Recorder
John Sawatzky
Verner Friesen
A.B. Koop
Harold Burkholder
Paul Roth
Geo. L. Hoffman
Mrs. Arnold Lowenberg
Don Smucker
Levi Koehn
Harley Stucky
Mrs. D.P. Ewert
Wilhelmina Kuyf
Nellie Penner
Elmer Neufeld
H.J. Andres
P.A. Wedel
Albert Gaeddert

Group B.

Loris Habegger, Chairman
David Habegger, Recorder
David Neufeld
H.T. Klaassen
Russell Mast
Erland Waltner
Geo. G. Dick
Glen Kleinsasser
Vernon Neufeld
Roland Goering
D.C. Wedel
Menno Bergen
Peter J. Dyck
D.J. Unruh
A.J. Richert
Elizabeth Goertz
A. M. Lohrentz
Ted E. Claassen

Group C.

E.G. Kaufman, Chairman
Ernst Harder, Recorder
David Janzen
Henry P. Epp
J.B. Wiens
Myron Hilty
H.D. Epp
Orlando Goering
Arden Slotter
Carl Landes
Paul G. Claassen
Grace Moyer
Walter Dyck
Robert Kreider
Carl Lehman
John Thiessen
Abe Wiebe
Grace Miller
Art Friesen

Group D.

P.K. Regier, Chairman
Menno Schrag, Recorder
Wilfred Ulrich
Frank Klassen
Dick Friesen
David Schultz
Arnold Nickel
Marion Kaufman
R.L. Hartzler
Marvin Ewert
Norman Abrahams
Mrs. A.M. Lohrentz
H.G. Nyce
J.W. Fretz
Ellis Graber
Willard Claassen
August Epp
Henry Toews
Sam J. Goering

List of Delegates

GENERAL CONFERENCE PEACE STUDY CONFERENCE

"The Gospel, the Church, and War"

April 10, 11, 1953

Canadian

1. David Neufeld
2. Frank Klassen
3. Verner Friesen
4. Henry Epp
5. H.T. Klaassen
6. Dick Friesen
7. A.B. Koop

Northern

1. Arnold Nickel
2. Robert Epp
3. Walter Gering
4. George G. Dick
5. Orlando J. Goering
6. Marion K. Kaufman
7. Glen Kleinsasser

Middle

1. Ernst Harder
2. Mrs. A. Lowenberg
3. Vernon Neufeld
4. Arden Slotter
5. I.W. Bauman

Central

1. R.L. Hartzler
2. David Habegger
3. Marvin Ewert
4. Paul Bertsche

Pacific

1. Myron Hilty

Eastern

1. Ellis Graber
2. Maynard Shelly
3. Wilfred Ulrich
4. Grace Moyer

Western

1. Carl Landes
2. Paul G. Claassen
3. Roland Goering
4. D.C. Wedel
5. Ed. G. Kaufman
6. Loris Habegger
7. Mrs. D.P. Ewert
8. Menno Bergen

Additional District Delegates presenting papers to the Conference

1. Don E. Smucker
2. Arnold Nickel
3. Harold Burkholder
4. Erland Waltner
5. Harley Stucky
6. Robert S. Kreider
7. Peter J. Dyck
8. Russell Mast
9. David Janzen
10. D.J. Unruh
11. John Sawatzky
12. Carl Lehman
13. J.W. Fretz
14. Paul Roth

Delegates at large (* Conference Board Members living in the vicinity)

1. John Thiessen
2. P.K. Regier
3. Albert Gaeddert
4. Willard Claassen
5. Menno Schrag
6. Wilhelmina Kuyf
7. Abe Wiebe
8. A.J. Richert
9. Grace Miller
10. Henry Toews
11. Herbert M. Dalke
12. Elmer Neufeld
13. *A.M. Lohrenz

14.* H.J. Andres
15.* Sam J. Goering
16.* P.A. Wedel
17.* E.J. Miller
18.* August Epp
19. Elmer Neufeld

"The Church, the Gospel, and War"
GENERAL CONFERENCE PEACE STUDY CONFERENCE
Eden Church, April 10, 11, 1953

Friday, 9:00 A.M. Albert Gaeddert, Chairman

Devotional period - - Dave Neufeld
Statement of our Problem - - Don E. Smucker
"The Gospel and Nonresistance"
Arnold Nickel
Harold Burkholder
Erland Waltner
Discussion groups

Friday, 1:15 P.M. Andrew Shelly, Chairman

Devotional period - - Dave Neufeld
"How the Apostolic Church Lost the Peace Position" - - Harley Stucky
"The Anabaptist Rediscovery" - - Robert S. Kreider
"The General Conference Approach to the Believers Church" - - P.J. Dyck
Discussion groups.

Friday, 7:00 P.M. D.C. Wedel, Chairman

Devotional period - - Dave Neufeld
"The Disciple as a Citizen"
Russell Mast
David Janzen
Discussion groups.

Saturday, 9:00 A.M. George Dick, Chairman

Devotional period - - Ellis Graber
"The Non-combatant Position in the Light of Scriptures and the Civilian Alternative"
D.J. Unruh
John Sawatzky
Carl Lehman
Discussion groups

Saturday, 1:15 P.M. R.L. Hartzler, Chairman

Devotional period - - Ellis Graber
"Toward a Revived Peace Position in our Conference"
J.W. Fretz
Paul Roth
Discussion groups

Saturday, 7:00 P.M. Albert Gaeddert, Chairman

Devotional period - - Ellis Graber
Findings Committee Report
Message to our Congregations - - Statement Committee
Closing Message - - John Thiessen

[illegible]

[illegible] far and near, we have joined together this morning to [illegible] which Jesus taught us concerning love and Christianity

[illegible] Luke 14:25-33: "... and he turned, and said unto them, [illegible] and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and chil[illegible] sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my [illegible] doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot [illegible] which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down [illegible] the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest [illegible] after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able [illegible] what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not [illegible] and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him [illegible] against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet [illegible] sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. [illegible] whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he [illegible] disciple."

[illegible] Garibaldi was standing on a street corner [illegible] follow him in order to organize an army to [illegible] The people asked him "What do you have to [illegible] great to offer. I offer you sweat, blood, [illegible] I do offer you" he said, "a free Italy [illegible] so many times was standing in a similar [illegible] to follow Him. And sometimes people were [illegible] the Master would turn around and [illegible] of the cross, of Christianity, [illegible] would [illegible] to follow Him through life and it [illegible] this morning we have some of these [illegible] that in His Kingdom there is [illegible] that many would be [illegible] enough to follow the Master [illegible] that there was not [illegible] they would have to enter [illegible] Kingdom.

[illegible] did not want to accept [illegible] were willing to follow [illegible] as long as He was offer[illegible] He was healing the sick, [illegible] the [illegible] ere [illegible]

DEVOTIONAL MESSAGES

David P. Neufeld

I. Friday Morning Session

Friends from far and near, we have joined together this morning to consider some of the things which Jesus taught us concerning love and Christianity.

St. Luke, Chapter 14:25-33: "... and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him. Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

The story is told of how Geribaldi was standing on a street corner one day asking men to follow him, follow him in order to organize an army to set the great nation of Italy free. The people asked him "What do you have to offer?" And he said "I have nothing great to offer. I offer you sweat, blood, and tears. I offer you also death, but I do offer you" he said, "a free Italy if you will follow me." It seems to me that Jesus was standing in a similar way calling men and women everywhere to follow him. And sometimes people were wondering what Jesus really had to offer when the Master would turn around and speak rather harshly to them. He would tell them of the cross, of Christianity, he would tell them of what it really meant to follow him through life and it seems to me that in the verses we have just read this morning we have some of these conditions of discipleship. Jesus seems to indicate that in His Kingdom there is no room for neutrality. The Jews often thought that they could be neutral in the ways of God - they thought it was enough to follow the letter of the law and not the spirit of the law, but they found that that was not enough. Jesus had to tell them rather decisively that they would have to enter a new course of life if they were to follow Him all the way.

We also find that in these verses Jesus does not want to accept any half-hearted followers. There were many people that were willing to follow him partly, many people who were willing to follow Him as long as He was offering bread, as long as He was doing wonders, as long as He was healing the sick, but when it came to taking the difficulties into consideration then they were not willing to follow Him all the way. But Jesus said we cannot follow Him in a half-hearted way. If you love anything in the world more than you love me you cannot be my follower. You must be able to take up your cross and follow me. Now to take up the cross, of course, is difficult. We, as human beings, are weak, and do not want to take the difficult into our life, but Jesus says

you have to face the difficult in order to follow Him. And be sure, he says, to count the cost. No man would build a tower unless he knew beforehand that he had enough money to finish it. If he did not finish it what would be the use of the tower? It would stand there as a statue of his folly. The people would see the tower and would mock the man that started such a project. Was Jesus possibly referring to Pilate who was supposed to have started building an aqueduct and was unable to finish it. Was he possibly pointing at that aqueduct now saying: "behold what a man tried to do but he was unable to finish?" Jesus continues his reasoning by relating how any King who is about to move into war, considers the cost. "Am I able", he says, "Am I able to win a war with half as many people as my opponenent, as my enemy has?" Jesus never was against heroism. He stood for heroism, but he said everyone must be willing to count the complete cost.

So we today must be able to count the cost and realize that half-heartedness is not enough, nor is an enthusiasm that lasts only a little while. Some people were very enthused about Jesus. They were very enthused about the way he was teaching, about the way He was living, about the way He was leading, but their enthusiasm was so short lived. And our enthusiasm about Christ's cause dare not be short lived - it ought to continue throughout all of life. Now when Jesus looked upon the crowd and told them something of the course of Christian life many turned aside. They were not willing to take up their cross and follow Him. They were not willing to go through the difficulties which Jesus showed them. They turned aside. And Jesus finally had to turn to his disciples and say: "Will you go away too?" And the answer was, of course, that they were not willing to go away. They were willing to follow Jesus. The question arises in our hearts today: what are we willing to do for the cause of Christ? Are we willing to gothe whole way, even if it means that we must go the way of the Cross? As we worship and think together may the Lord so lead us in our thinking that we might be strengthened in our determination, that we will follow not only for a day. Not only for a while but for always. May God bless us. Shall we rise for a word of prayer.

God, our Heavenly Father, we look up to Thee this morning hour and we do thank Thee that Thou didst send Jesus Christ on Earth to come and save humanity. When we were yet far away Thou didst think of us. When we were yet sinners Thou didst redeem us. We thank Thee, our Father in Heaven, that Thou hast given us Thy Holy Word and that it is a Light unto our way. Grant that we might be willing to walk in this Light. Grant that we might be willing to always walk the way of righteousness and to always follow Thee wherever Thou wouldst lead us. We are aware of the fact, Dear Father, that Thou art going to put a cross upon us, and that we have already begun to feel it. We pray that our strength might equal our cross, that we might not falter nor fail under it, but that we might carry it to Thy honor and to Thy glory. Our Father in Heaven, we thank Thee for this conference where we can come together from east and west, from south and north. And as we think together and as we pray together, Dear Lord, we pray that Thou wouldst give us Wisdom from above. Grant to us, Our Father, a spirit of willingness to do Thy Will. Give us an enthusiasm that will last for a day, for a year, for a life. Lord Jesus, we thank Thee for blessing us this morning and we pray that Thou wouldst continue to bless. In Jesus Name we pray. Amen.

II. Friday Afternoon Session

For this afternoon's devotions I should like to read out of the First Epistle of John, beginning with Chapter One, verse three:

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

When one of the great compositions of Hayden was to be presented in Vienna the old Master himself was present. People were very much enthused to see Hayden there and as this great production, "Creation" was presented it came to its full height when the orchestra and the great choir sang concerning the coming of the Light. Was it only because Hayden was there, I do not know, but the people stood up and jubilantly cried out. The old Master stood up and he pointed his finger heavenward and he said: "Not I, not I, but from above comes the Light". As it was suggested in our discussion group this forenoon, the Gospel may well be looked upon as the Light that shines down upon us Christians here and we are to walk in it. We are wanderers going from place to place, walking in this Light that shines over our entire life, and as wanderers of the Light we now have fellowship with God. God is a pure light, in Him is no darkness at all, says John. And this pure light shining down upon us fills us now and cleanses us.

Now in this Church to which John wrote there were some people that taught that they were on a very high spiritual level and they said "we never sin". And John simply says to these people, that cannot be the truth. They lie. If we say that we have no sins we lie. We all realize that there is sin in our lives but we realize also that through Christ, as it was pointed out so well this morning, through Christ, we can be rid of this sin and we can become the wanderers, the pilgrims that walk in a pure light, only a light such as God can give. However, those that walk in this light also have fellowship one with another.

There are many things that bind us together. The language binds us together, belonging to one nation binds us together. Over at Bethel the instructors have seen it over and over again how the Canadians get together. They have so many things in common. It is not that they know each other so well. The mere fact that they come from one country seems to bind them together. But there is something that will bind us much more than nationality or language or common interests. It is the Love of God. And thus we find, as Children of God, that we can walk together this way, this road of life, and we feel attached one to the other because we are walking in the same direction. As we have gathered here I feel that that is what holds us together these days - we all have that same aim to follow the same leader, to serve the same master. Therefore as we walk in the light as He is in the light we have fellowship one with another. Shall we pray.

Our God and Father, we thank Thee that Thou didst send Jesus, the Light of the World, to shine in the dark places of the world, to shine into each of our lives. We thank Thee our Father in Heaven, that today we can let this Light shine into our life, see its wrinkles, its faults, but we thank Thee that Thou hast a way in which we can be cleansed. We pray our Father, that Thou wouldst cleanse our thinking, our motives, our all this afternoon, so that we can think upon the great things concerning Thy Gospel. O Lord, we pray that Thou wouldst reveal Thyself in a special way and grant us the willingness to follow the way which Thou dost outline for us. We pray in Jesus Name.

III. Friday Evening Session

This evening we would like to read out of St. Matthew, Chapter 16:13-16:

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

It is not very difficult to ask a few questions. Someone has said that it is easy to ask questions but so difficult to get the right answer. But Jesus is not asking questions only for question's sake. Someone has said rightly that if we were able to answer the questions of Jesus correctly we would answer the greatest questions of life. Jesus was very much concerned that his disciples, who were now in a quiet place at Caesarea Philippi, should think through some of the great problems that faced them. And it seems to me that here in this text that we have read we have one of the greatest questions which Jesus ever asked. A question which concerns not only the disciples of His day, but a question that also concerns every disciple of this day. In reality you will find that there are two questions here. He asks what do the people say who I am? Now the disciples had heard much. They knew very well what other people said about Jesus. But they did not criticize Him and they did not tell Him the criticism that they had heard. They had heard often enough that people said Jesus was a wine-bibber, they had heard often enough that the people had said Jesus was a friend of sinners, but they kept quiet and they said only the complimentary things. They said, some say that Thou art John the Baptist. Oh yes, John the Baptist was a fiery preacher, a man of courage, and they compared Jesus with John the Baptist. Others say that Thou art Elias. Here was a man with personality. Here was a man who was willing to go through. And some considered Jesus as one who would go through just as Elias would have done. And others had seen the meekness of Jesus and the love of Jesus and the tenderness of Jesus and said He must be Jeremia. And some said He must be one of the prophets. They did not know which one - He must be one. But then Jesus comes home and He asks "But whom say ye that I am?" That was a great question. That was the determining question. Who say ye that I am? And as we heard so well this morning, Jesus is the center of the Gospel and for that reason we must become clear in our thinking as to who Jesus is to us. Who do we think that Jesus is? This was the time for the big fisherman of Galillee to say who this man, Jesus, really was. And he answers: Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And anyone that answers in that way must answer out of deep conviction. To give only intellectual assent to Jesus is not enough. Our

answer must come out of the deepest of our convictions, that Jesus really is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Only if we speak out of convictions will we be able to convince others that He is the Son of God. However anyone that gives such an answer to the question that Jesus raises will find that this answer and this Jesus whom he thus accepts will fill his life and give it a new content. Thus as these disciples answered Jesus, Thou art the Son of the living God, there started for them a way of life, a new way of life. These men, though some of them were only fishermen, went from place to place preaching a new God, preaching a new way of life, preaching a new foundation, and this very idea of Jesus filled their life to the extent that they were willing to risk their lives for this cause. We too, if we will answer in the way that Peter answered that day, will also find that Jesus is willing to fill our life completely. Then we will be able to go on and give others this new message of hope and life that we have. An old Saint was on his death bed and the friends came near and asked him, "What do you say after these many years of service, what shall we as the young disciples of today do?" And he whispered in his last halting breath: "Gon on, go on". And it seems to me that Jesus is saying to us: "Keep on, go on, the time is running short." We have a complete Gospel to give to the world and it is our task to proclaim that Gospel. We cannot do it out of our own strength but we can do it in His strength. Shall we pray.

Eternal God and Heavenly Father, we come before Thy Throne of Grace this evening to thank Thee that Thou hast Power sufficient for every one of us. We look upon ourselves and we know that there is no strength in us but we would answer as once Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. We put our complete faith in Thee, and as Thou wouldst fill our lives we pray that Thou wouldst use them to Thy honour and to Thy glory. Oh Jesus, we thank Thee for the many manifestations of Thy love in these past days and as we look into the future, and sometimes it looks dark to us, we pray that Thy guiding and protecting Hand might be over us, guiding us in the ways of truth and in the ways of Life. We thank Thee for the conference we can have here this evening and we pray that Thou wouldst be with us, for we ask it in Thy Holy Name. Amen.

DEVOTIONAL MESSAGES

Ellis Graber

I. BEING CHRISTIAN IN A WARRING WORLD
(Saturday Morning Session)

Scripture: James 4:1-10

These words of scripture serving as the basis for our meditation this morning are from the first of the seven general or catholic epistles, as they are called in contrast to the letters of Paul usually written with a special congregation in mind.

James, the brother of our Lord, was an early leader in the church at Jerusalem who at first with others in the family did not believe in Jesus, but who with the crucifixion and resurrection also became a devoted follower. When Paul came to the Holy City in 58 A.D., James was already a respected leader. Sometimes he was called James the Just, because of his righteous and just way of living. Tradition has it that his knees became hard like a camel's because he spent so much time on his knees in prayer.

But aside from these matters of personal interest which make the book of James all the more meaningful, one of the most impressive observations is the way in which James emphasizes the ethical teachings of Jesus which one finds in the gospels, especially in the Sermon on the Mount.

For instance, he specifically advises against swearing of oaths, saying the "yes" and "no" are sufficient. (James 5:12) It reminds us of the Master, "Do not swear at all...." (Matthew 5:33). He places a strong emphasis on behaviour and Christian conduct. Faith and works must go together. (James 2:14-17). That has the ring of Jesus, "Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter the Kingdom of heaven...." (Matthew 7:21) He denounces the rich, (James 5:1-6) reminding us of the One who said that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven. In these five chapters he deplores hypocrisy. It reminds us of Jesus speaking of tomb stones and dead bones, of cups that are dirty inside and clean outside.

But, perhaps the most striking emphasis of all is in the fourth chapter where he speaks of strife and war. Again he approaches the matter much as Jesus did. "What causes wars and what causes fightings among you?" To my knowledge that is the only place in the New Testament where we have the question put so directly. What causes wars? What is the answer? What caused World War II? The man on the street may say Nazism, the terrible doctrine of the Superman, anti-semitic Hitlerism, together with Prussian Militarism. What caused the Korean War? Communism, atheistic Godlessness! Or the government may be to blame. Troops were pulled out when we should have strengthened our forces. There were vacillating policies in Washington, one blunder after another. The sociologist has another answer as he weighs forces that have been pitted against each other. The politician thinks in terms of balance of power, and the scientist is concerned with the efficiency of weapons. There

are indeed many opinions as to the cause of wars, but what is the Christian answer?

James answers his own question in Holy Writ. "What causes wars and what causes fightings among you?" "Is it not your passions that are at war in your members?" (James 4:1-2) Observe that wars and fightings are used together, inseparably, in the same sentence. War is strife between people. World War II was a strife between the nations of the world. War may also be strife between man and wife in a house. It is, nevertheless, a miniature World War. James gives the answer to the causes of these -- personal desires, satisfying cravings for pleasures, selfishness -- "You desire and do not have; so you kill." (James 4:2)

If it is true that Christians of that day did not engage in battles of war they may well have resorted to the kind of killing where hatred, insult and anger are the two-edged swords that mortally wound. What causes wars? Covetousness! "And you covet and cannot obtain; so you fight and wage war." (James 4:2) Is it not true that both nations and individuals see things they want and being unable to get them resort to violence to secure that which they are seeking?

What causes wars? Lack of prayer! We simply do not ask. Or, on the other hand, plenty of prayer for which we do not receive because we ask wrongly. Perhaps it is because our prayers are of the "grocer type" where we ask to satisfy our appetites. We are also guilty of asking to spend on our passions. (James 4:3)

This is a tragic yet true picture of humanity. The question comes to us who are gathered here, "How do we live in such a world of strife?" There is a three-fold answer which follows:

(1) "Submit yourselves therefore to God." (James 4:7) We need to put the Almighty in charge of our lives and our affairs. Our failure in worship and in having a vital, living relationship to God is dramatically portrayed in the lines of Franklin D. Elmer, Jr., in "The American Cathedral."

Main Street is an empty-ended nave
Thronged with worshipers.
The windows are brilliant showcases,
Stuffed with the trivia of little life.
Soul-hungry, harried multitudes,
Seeking, seeking, seeking,
Dash from the Chapel of the Dollar,
Checkbook still in hand,
To share vicarious confession
Slumped in a deep cushioned seat
Before a silver screen.
A touch of laughter, a sniff of tears,
Then out again,
And now the station of the hat,
Or shoes, or candy, or a bright necktie--
Then a visit to the Fountain of the Rich Milk Shake,
And Home!

Day after day they come,
For this is a seven-day faith!
See how devoutly they genuflect at the crossings,
To the Red and Green,
Rushing, stopping, rushing!
Day after day they leave,
Wearier, more harried than when they came.
Main Street is an empty-ended nave,
Look east! Look west! There is no altar!

America does not worship at the altar. That is why we have war. Man has to worship something. If he will not worship God at the real altar, he will set up an ersatz altar, a false God of his own desires and selfish hopes. Either man worships the Holy, Eternal God or consciously or unconsciously he worships a false God with all its evil consequences.

(2) "Resist the devil...." (James 4:7b) Here again James breathes the spirit of Jesus. Jesus had to resist the devil. He had to resist Satan when he refrained from turning stones into bread to satisfy his physical hunger -- comfort. A second time he said "No" and would not cast himself down from the pinnacle in spectacular demonstration -- popularity. Again he resisted the devil and refused to take possession of the kingdoms of the world -- power. Three times he resisted him. Slyly, cleverly, Satan came quoting scripture, as a wolf clothed as a harmless sheep. Comforts, popularity, power -- are these not basic to the causes of war? If war is to end we must learn to say "no" again and again when the evil one strives to get us to pursue selfish ambitions.

(3) "Draw near to God and he will draw near to you." (James 4:8) This is our hope that God will help us. He will be with us if we will but have Him. The instructions are clear. We are to take the initiative by drawing near to Him.

In Sallman's great painting, "Christ at Door" we see an illustration of the beautiful verse, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him...." (Rev. 3:20)

In this painting Christ is standing at the sturdy oak door set in solid stone masonry. He is waiting patiently, hoping to enter. But as we look at the painting closely we see there is no latch. Indeed there is none for the door must be opened from the inside. Christ does not force his way in. He enters where there are those who receive him and welcome him.

For the peace of our souls and of the world let us open the door of our hearts and let Him in.

PRAYER: Gracious Father, who hast given us life, hope, and faith, and without whom life is incomplete and meaningless; Thou who art the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, at the beginning of this new day we pray that Thy spirit may come into our hearts and dwell in us and among us.

We come before Thee in humility, ever conscious of our sins and failures and praying for Thy gracious forgiveness and abounding mercy.

Grant pardon where we have followed the desires of our hearts, where we have sought to fulfill the desires of the flesh, and where we have walked in our own ways.

Help us to lose ourselves in Thy cause. Confirm every endeavor in accordance with Thy will. Strengthen our faith in Thee; lighten our minds and warm our spirits that we may have a clearer vision of Thy truth.

Go Thou with us as we deliberate on Thy word and Thy gospel and its meaning for our lives. In the name and spirit of Christ, our Lord and Saviour. AMEN.

II. LIVING AND WALKING AS CHRISTIANS
(Saturday Afternoon Session)

Scripture: Galatians 5:16-25
Text: "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."
Galatians 5:25

Twenty years after Jesus was nailed to the cross on Golgatha Paul the apostle wrote a letter to the churches of Galatia. As it unfolds we come to this meaningful admonition and warning of our text. The circumstances under which it was written are rather significant.

Before writing the letter he had twice traveled and ministered in this province. He walked the dusty roads, preached to the folks in the country, to the city people, to the rich and to the poor, to the Jews and Greeks, to the descendants of the Gauls and Celts, in short to all in that country of rich contrasts. He labored hard and long in spite of his infirmity and according to his own account he was generally well-received. He established countless fellowships of believers, churches which met in homes or synagogues. They grew in faith and prospered.

And then something happened. Paul writes, "You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth?" (Gal. 5:7) "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you....?" (Gal. 3:1a) Something had happened indeed. Those of Jewish background tried to embody the Christian gospel into their faith. Moses was as important as Jesus Christ. The Hellenists brought with them their traditions, their gods and goddesses. Each said his own gospel was the true gospel. Paul's gospel, they said, was the gospel of men, not of God. There was dissension, confusion, friction, fighting one with another in the whole province. In the face of this crisis Paul rises to the occasion and proclaims those magnificant and timeless words, "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." (Gal. 5:25)

If you live by the Spirit, if you call yourself a Christian, if you say you follow the gospel, if you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, if you indicate to the world your loyalty to Him and go forth in the name of Christ -- Fine! Splendid! But if you do that then make sure that your walk is in accordance with the profession you make.

Galatia was a land of rich contrasts and variations. Geographically we speak of North Galatia and South Galatia. There were country folks, peasants with their valuable gardens.. There were city folks, industrialists with their wealth. Some lived in the mountain regions, others on the plains. Economically, culturally, and geographically there were great differences but the impact of this message came to all, crossing every geographical barrier and every economic level. Wherever you are, wherever you live, whatever you do, to whatever church you belong, know this, "If you live by the Spirit, you must also walk by the Spirit."

The Galatians were a people with a variety of religious experiences. There were Jews and Greeks whom Paul had to remind constantly that they were equals before God. There were those of the faith of Abraham and others of the mystic cults. But again, no matter what the outlook on the gospel or the religious background the message applied to all, "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."

The Galatians followed the desires of the flesh. Paul had warned against this repeatedly. God had admonished in many ways that the desires we have are all too often such that keep us from doing what we should, and separate us from our Maker.

A list of the vices in the churches that could have been read at the annual Galatian conference would have included these things which came to the attention of the traveling preacher, Paul --

> "....immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like." (Gal.5:19-21)

The idea of a pure church could hardly have come from Galatia. It doesn't sound like a pure church when there is drunkenness, party spirit, and immorality in it. But here were vices, serious problems, for which there must be a solution.

The Christian Answer

Thanks be to God that one of the characteristics of the Christian religion is that God never allows a difficulty or problem to exist for which He does not provide the answer. So it is here.

> "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;...." (Gal.5:22-23)

Someone has well said that the real question for everyone to decide is this -- "Am I a part of the problem, or am I a part of the solution?" Everyone is a part of one or the other, consciously or unconsciously. The solution for the church and for us lies in the fruit of the Spirit. "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."

Walk by the Spirit

James Stewart gives us a clue to a helpful understanding of Psalm 1. He points out three steps that can befall a man.

(1) "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly...." You see the man walking past evil, glancing at it, half-ashamed, but still looking at it, hoping no one will see him.
(2) "Nor standeth in the way of sinner...." Now he has stopped. He is not quite so ashamed. He listens, He is a bit bolder.
(3) "Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." There it has happened. There is no shame now. He sits down with them. What he once thought was bad is accepted. He is one of them. He laughs with them and says, "Evil? Do you call that evil?" What tragedy comes upon us when we render lip service to Christ, but harden ourselves so that what once was evil is now called good. We dare not stop. We must walk by the Spirit.

Pilgrim in Bunyan's immortal work is on the way to the Celestial City. He walks, on and on, through mire, overcoming every obstacle. Others become discouraged and turn back, some stand and then run, but Pilgrim goes on, plodding, not resting too long, steadily and surely he goes forward to reach his goal. He lives by the Spirit, and by the grace of God he must also walk by the Spirit.

The Challenge

In the light of the papers that have been presented in which it has become apparent that we need to reaffirm our allegiance to God and Jesus Christ, and the highest and best of the Anabaptist heritage, dare we challenge ourselves to greater devotion by this paraphrase:

"O foolish Mennonites! Who has bewitched you? You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

Know this that whether you live in Canada, United States, France, Paraguay, or any other country, if you call yourselves Mennonites -- Christians- then let us walk accordingly.

Whether you have had a religious experience in which you have found God at your mother's knee, at the altar, or while toiling in God's field, forget not "That if you live by the Spirit, you must also walk by the Spirit."

And whatever vices, differences, difficulties, there may be in your churches see that you continue to live and walk by the Spirit so that the fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, gentleness, and self-control may abound.

And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart."

PRAYER: Our God, Eternal Truth and Goodness, we bless Thee for the souls of every age, which have struggled and aspired and found victory by surrendering to Thy will.

We pray unto Thee that the beauty of our God may be upon us transforming our lives and granting us the grace to walk by Thy Spirit.

Where we are right wilt Thou strengthen us. Where we are in error wilt Thou rectify. Where we are groping wilt Thou give

steadfast faith to continue to seek Thy face. Where there is hate may there be love; where there is war may there be peace.

Continue to make Thy presence felt among us in our fellowship. May our endeavors be strengthened with Thy divine benediction. May we be inspired in these deliberations and communion with one another and with Thee, that we may go forth from this conference proclaiming the gospel of Thy peace. In the Spirit of Christ our Lord and Saviour, we pray. AMEN.

JESUS CHRIST THE SAME FOREVER

(Saturday Evening Session)

Scripture: Hebrews 13: 1-9
Text: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."
Hebrews 13-8

Ours is an unchanging Saviour, an unchanging gospel, and an unchanging God, eternal as the hills. Our problem lies not with these but with changing,unpredictable man whose understanding and spirit is never static but is always changing for better or for worse. And whether he increases or decreases in favor with God and his fellowmen, depends not on the action of God who always does His part, but on mortal, finite man.

A man comes one day to the place where he feels he understands God, knows the gospel, and has a personal relationship to Jesus Christ his Saviour. He knows the Bible. Ten years later he looks back. If he has a good memory, or better yet a written statement of what he held to ten years ago, he will find that his understanding of the Bible, of the gospel, of the work of the church with its total outreach appears differently, not because these have changed basically, but because a change has been wrought within him. Man through sufferings, sorrows and joys, learning and Christian nurture, is constantly changing, but Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

What was Jesus like yesterday? Yesterday means 1,900 years ago when he walked upon the earth -- for a thousand years are but as a day in the sight of God. What is he like today? What will he be like tomorrow? A thousand years from now? If we can answer but one of these questions we can answer all three. If we know what Jesus was like yesterday we have the answer for today and tomorrow. Fortunately we know. We can walk across the pages of the New Testament with the biographers and those who wrote the memoirs. We can see what he said, what he did, what he was. We can catch his spirit and his purpose. We can walk through the epistles and note what happened to his friends and also to his enemies. If we drink in all of it -- his life, his death, his resurrection we shall see him as he was yesterday and is today.

Let us think of only two of the things that God in Christ tried to get across to mankind when he was upon earth.

(1) How to deal with our fellow men. Jesus and his disciples were in Samaria. They had no business traveling through there, folks thought. Samaritans and Jews were not friendly. Samaritans were to be kept in place. It was noon

and hot. Jesus was tired as he came to Sychar, near the place where Jacob had given ground to Joseph, the site of Jacob's well. The disciples left him alone and went to the city to buy food. A woman came -- a Samaritan woman -- in the heat of the day, not in the usual morning hour, for now she would not feel the fingers of scorn pointed at her. A wicked woman. Jesus knew it. HE knows! Five husbands!

We can hear the familiar words even today. Immoral! Unclean! Don't let my boy play with her illegitimate child. Hope she doesn't move into our part of town! Would you take her into the church or wouldn't you?

Jesus said to her, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24) Not a single word of accusation! Not one reminder or condemnation! Just this -- God is seeking folks like you to worship Him.

Remember Zaccheus and Matthew, publicans and tax collectors, the despised of yesterday when Jesus was here. They charged more than the traffic could bear. They took from the poor. They squeezed out all the profits they could from the Jewish people and yet Jesus went and ate with that scum. He even told a parable of the Pharisee and publican and set forth the truth that the publican was in the right. And did he not say that publicans and harlots go into the kingdom before the Pharisees? When he dealt with Zaccheus and Matthew instead of pushing them down another notch he lifted them up to a new world.

One morning Jesus came down from the Mount of Olives and went to the Tempel, and sat down to teach. The scribes and Pharisees, the good people of the day, brought a woman taken in the very act of adultery. A serious charge, if our estimate of Jewish law is right. This was a terrible crime. Give her the treatment! "Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?" (John 8:5) Here it is black on white in the Scriptures! You've read it!

But Jesus replied, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." (John 8:7) One by one they left. "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." (John 8:11b) Here as elsewhere Jesus does not heap condemnation upon condemnation. Sometimes I wonder whether Paul was thinking of this incident when he wrote that the letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life.

Such is the picture of the Jesus of yesterday. When men and women came, conscious that they had failed, repentant, with a sense of guilt and condemnation, he started where they were with his redeeming love. I believe I am correct in saying that there is not a single instance in the Bible where Jesus denounced or reproached anyone who came conscious of his failure and of his need of God, be it the Samaritan Woman, the Prodigal Son, Matthew or Zaccheus, the thief on the cross, or a host of others that could be mentioned. That was not the purpose of the son of God who came not to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved. (John 3:17)

It is to the self-righteous Pharisees who had no sense of need that the pronouncement is one of woe. (Matthew 23)

Here is a tremendous challenge to follow our Lord in our relationships with our fellow men who hunger for truth and righteousness.

(2) A changed nature is essential. Remember Saul of Acts 8 active against the early church when persecution arose? His name and presence were feared, for he entered homes and committed men and women to prison. Saul was brilliant. Saul had convictions, Saul was determined. He was sure he was right. He would see to it that any falsehood or evil that would rear its ugly head would be trampled down quickly. Right would conquer and truth would win.

One day he stood by and saw Stephen, a Greek, being stoned to death. That would crush wrong! In that spirit he continued going up and down the country until his conversion experience on the Damascus road. Now see what Jesus Christ did to him.

His name was changed from Saul to Paul. Instead of throwing stones, they threw stones at him and left him for dead. Instead of persecuting, he was the persecuted. After Jesus Christ entered his life he was put in a basket and let down over the city wall. He was put in prison. He was shipwrecked and suffered untold hardships. His relationships to his fellow men, his method of dealing with them had changed and was now in bold contrast to his former ways. Now he could write,

> "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Romans 8:35, 37)

That is what happens to a man when he is really converted. The Jesus Christ of yesterday, today and tomorrow brings about that change of attitude, spirit, and procedure whereby he is controlled by the love of Christ. That same change in relationships could also be traced in Peter, James, John, Thomas and other disciples of our Lord.

Some of us had the privilege of visiting the Peace Palace at the Hague this summer. As we made our way up the marble staircase we were impressed by a statue of Christ. It was an imitation of the famous "Christ of the Andes" located in South America. There it was -- Christ with his left hand on the cross, and his right hand uplifted in benediction. Yet while in that Peace Palace we were once again mindful that in spite of all the efforts of the nations, and the contributions of many peoples, there still was no peace. Was it sheer irony that the statue in the Peace Palace was merely an imitation of the "Christ of the Andes" or was it graphic symbolism that this imitation was shrunk eight times the size of the original masterpiece?

We hear of wars and rumors of wars. There is no peace. Is it not that we have watered down Jesus Christ? We have shrunk him to our human dimensions. We have limited him to our vision, to our frail human capacities. But it dare not be done. Jesus Christ would deal with men now as he did then-- and he does. He will still change men now as he did then. But in order for this to pass we need a renewed commitment to the Jesus Christ who is the same yesterday, today, yea, and forever.

PRAYER: As we come to the end of another day and to the conclusion of this conference we would again turn in renewed dedication to Thee, our Father, praying Thy special nearness and Thy presence. We praise Thee for Thy message to men. We bless Thee for the privilege of considering the meaning of Thy love together, one with another.

We would glorify Thee for the sense of Fellowship that brought us together, which has united us in this common endeavor, and which sends us forth to serve in our respective churches, in our daily walks of life.

We would pray for Thy forgiveness where we have proclaimed Thee with our lips, and denied Thee with our lives. We humbly acknowledge our sins; our failure to love, our neglect to understand; our slothfulness to move with the compassion of Christ. We deplore our outreach, so limited and pitiful in scope.

We beseech Thee, our God, for a life that is holier, more committed, more revealing, richer in mystery, nobler in service, more fully dedicated to Thee.

Bid us now to obey Thy instinct as we serve Thee. With the enlightened conscience which has come to us in our seeking together may we be sent forth in the Spirit of Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; in whose name we pray, and in whose name we would walk. AMEN.

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Gen. Conf. Peace Study Conference
Eden - April 10, 11, 1953

A STATEMENT OF OUR PROBLEMS

Don E. Smucker

I. The Background of the Problem

A. The Background in Basic Conference Characteristics

1. Complexity

No branch of Mennonites in North America, indeed, in all the world can equal the complexity of the General Conference. Compare the General Conference with the Mennonite Brethren, the Old Mennonites or the Amish and the contrast is striking. European origins are complex in terms of place of emigration, times of emigration and the motives for emigration.

By the same token American origins are complex. There are various layers of experience here, beginning with the original movement as a deviation from the Old Mennonites via Oberholzer approximately one hundred years ago. Various European tributaries then pour into the simple organizational and spiritual center created by the Oberholzerites. Then mergers and confederations take place, the latest being the addition of the Central Conference which comes out of an Amish background. Just as the European "joiners" also brought a certain climate of conviction and practice, the past one hundred years in America comprise the whole period of missions, education, publication, service organizations and, what is most important, new theological currents of modernism, dispensationalism and the social Gospel.

Thus, the combination of European and American factors makes the General Conference unusually complex in terms of national background, theological outlook and ethical practice.

2. Small numbers spread across the U.S.A. and Canada

In addition to complexity, a further factor is that the Conference is a very small denomination very unevenly spread across two nations plus mission and service outposts throughout the world. In the earlier days this made communication almost impossible and, even today, very difficult.

Whole sections of the congregations in the conference have never had really meaningful fellowship in the context of the conference and many have had genuine isolation. In this predicament they naturally turned to the fellowship which was available even when counter to basic convictions of the conference.

While most district conferences have met annually the General Conference meets only once every three years, thus seriously limiting the face-to-face fellowship so necessary for real love and understanding.

These small numbers coupled with extreme frugality also lessened the financial resources available for important work of the conference.

3. Congregational polity

The complexity and small, widely distributed membership were expected to function through a very loose congregational polity in which the conference, in any case, was only advisory. To compare this with the Presbyterian or synodical; and the Episcopal or rule by Bishops is to realize how radically different Congregational polity really is.

While the original view of the Congregational church order included truly disciplined local congregations it has never, by definition, envisaged close uniformity. Over against this it has placed a broader spiritual unity and sacrificed anything resembling uniformity. Perhaps it was this very looseness of organization which was expected to hold together such diverse elements in the conference.

4. Theological disunity without any major attempts to solve the problem

Even though almost everyone has known about some of the issues separating the conference, no major attempts have been made to deal with the problem. Mennonite scholarship has, in the main, been concerned with history and not theology, ethics or Bible. Only from outside could the various parties of the church obtain help - , and thus the conference heard the shot of theological challenge and rode off in all directions. The tragic failure to think through great issues, to write about them to fearlessly accept or reject from various proposals, will remain as one of our great tragedies.

These four factors of complexity, smallness and wide distribution, loose congregational polity and theological disunity must be considered with sobering realism as we attempt to study the specific facet of peace witness in the specific context of the General Conference Mennonite Church of North America.

B. Specific Background in Terms of the Peace Witness of the Conference

1. The General Conference is still recovering from a bad start and a slow start.

The peace convictions of the early Oberholzer group were fairly vague - partly as any Mennonites were at that time and partly as a general reaction against an overly rigorous pattern. For almost 80 years the peace work of the conference floundered without genuine leadership nor organizational expression. Finally, in 1926 a Conference peace committee was organized. We are now the heirs of this brief interlude of 27 years of organized peace leadership.

It was not only a slow start but in many ways a poor start in 1926. The conference already had its fingers burned as a pioneer member of the Federal Council, making communication and discrimination on this issue very difficult. Throughout Protestantism a general, rosy, optimism prevailed with which the realistic Mennonite mind was either fascinated or disgusted.

At the very time when American Protestantism opened its mind to the peace concern, the Conference was too new in peace education to give much leadership because of lack of unity and clarity and momentum in its own household.

2. Running counter to non-resistance as an expression of ethical non-conformity was the general trend toward adjustment to the American environment.

President Pannabecker's Yale thesis heavily documents the adjustment of the conference culture to the American scene. Some good things like missions and education were learned from this new adjustment. But, in general, the past fifty years has seen increasing unwillingness to assume a conscious sense of conflict between the church and the world; a rejection, in other words, of the Anabaptist doctrine of the church in favor of greater identification with the community.

Some things, as we observed, were good; some were neutral, neither good nor bad; but many adjustments were bad, actually weakening our Christian witness in many important areas and, above all, the peace concern.

Moreover, throughout these years America is coming to power as a great national and military state and one great world war is to come and go before the conference even organizes a peace committee.

If we think of a small committee, one of the least important as compared with missions, education or publication, trying to cope with a major cultural shift, involving the very doctrine of the church, and our whole orientation on Holy Scripture and the Gospel, we can see the nature of the conflict and the weakness of our counter-response to a serious challenge.

3. The ill-fated attempt to organize an unofficial peace committee revealed both the strength of the peace witness in the conference and the inability of unofficial, independent agencies to carry on peace education.

The Mennonite Peace Society was organized in the twenties to keep alive the peace testimony and especially in more liberal inter-denominational terms.

Appreciation can be expressed for the way in which this was carried forth with real sacrifice. And with some fresh insight and outlook. But the Mennonite mind is radically committed to delegated responsibility and action, suggesting that our attack must take place in the very structure of our conference.

4. Unexpected help to the General Conference peace witness came from three Quarters.

The first great support and invigoration to the Conference peace testimony came from the Russian migrations. The Western and Northern Districts provided the center for the conference testimony in the second Warld War in sharp contrast to the original historical centers of the conference in the Eastern and Middle districts. The contrast may be seen when comparing the Western to the Eastern districts with 43 per cent of drafted men in the W.D. in CPS, 18 per cent in IAO while the Eastern district had 6 per cent in CPS, 8 per cent in IAO. The thrilling story of courage and martyrdom in Russia is an epic in modern Mennonite history. This great stream of testimony has meant much to the conference, indeed, is the center of gravity in our testimony.

The second area of support came from the unceasing stream of men joining the conference from the Old Mennonites, the symbol of whom was the late C. Henry Smith. Whatever these men, Goshen alumni by and large, had rejected in more conservative Mennonitism, they had not rejected the peace testimony. In fact, it was very real to them and this was soon felt.

The third area of support has come from the inter-Mennonite life of the Mennonite Central Committee. Here much of the M.C.C. was a fellowship of service without much explanation or theology. But the advent of C.P.S. stimulated the M.C.C. into the development of an educational program. Out of this came the Core Course pamphlets, numerous other publications and hundreds of educational situations. Slowly a basis emerged for the M.C.C. position, partly official, partly unofficial. Those on the left, either theologically or tactically didn't like it; those on the right in IAO or in some other theological orientation didn't like it. But, it became the "center" of the American Mennonite peace testimony with incalculable impact. And this includes the General Conference.

These three influences from Mennonite life helped revive the peace testimony. Obviously, non-Mennonite pacifists were also speaking and writing in the peace field. And, in many of the years before the war almost had the field to themselves. With the advent of Hitler in 1933 this popular pacifism became less powerful. But, it is still a factor to reckon with in any final survey of how we have arrived at our present point.

5. The C.P.S. era brought forth outstanding leadership resources which augers well for the future.

Sick as the General Conference was and is, its spiritual vitality was still greater than many expected. When the final ink was put on the C.P.S. ledger it seemed that the conference had a solid number of young men and women of real leadership ability, a fact which did much to restore confidence in the G.C. among some of its critics.

II. The Problems We Face

It is against the background of the previously enumerated factors that we must attempt to state the problems before us. In this paper we are not attempting exhaustive treatment but only the kind of general survey which will help the Moundridge meetings.

These problems are cultural, theolgical, political, inter-Mennonite, ecumenical and tactical.

A. Cultural

In my July 1952 Mennonite Quarterly Review article war was seen as a powerful cultural order, moulding, processing, shaping and hammering the human personality through its influence in every area of life. Some see war as the very essence of all human culture while others see it as the most powerful single cultural order competing with other cultural orders. By culture, of course, we mean what the Bible calls the world. Throughout the Word of God it is assumed that the Christian and his church face a terrible struggle with this worldly culture. And nowhere is the struggle more acute than in the case of war-making and nationalistic claims.

Of all the problems we face, this is the most vast and massive. When the Bible and social science and history combined to warn us of the all-embracing power of a culture loaded with war and carnal strife, it will take formidable opposition to resist this pressure.

It suggests that many will give up nonresistance more out of life circumstances than change of convictions. It suggests that the peace program must root in the most radical claims of the Gospel and the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It suggests that the church must have a great program of nurture facing rich, well-oiled propaganda machines out to win the lives of everyone who will not dare to be a Daniel. It suggests that we must have the total Gospel speaking to the total man in the total situation. In other words, the cultural approach forces us to consider absolutely everything relevent to the task of nurturing and sustaining the Christian peacemaker in the Christian brotherhood as he witnesses and serves in a hostile world.

B. Political

Ernst Troeltsch has said that there is no perfect solution of the church and state issue but only endless reformulations. Today we are trying to reformulate after an amazing paradox: (1) the modern facts of totalitarianism and statism giving untold millions of people a real fear of their governments as demonic and diabolical; (2) greater cooperation with federal government through C.P.S. and relief than anytime in the past two hundred years, and all this as conscientious objectors to the military claims of the state.

There is a deep division among sincere peacemakers in the American Mennonite scene: those who believe that political responsibility in elective and appointive offices can be squared with non-resistance; and those who do not believe this.

Perhaps it would be best to think of four areas of political responsibility:

1. Executive
2. Legislative
3. Judicial
4. Administrative

Executives, federal, state and local, head up armies and/or police and this seems out of bounds. Legislators have more freedom in this connection but find it almost impossible to be elected on a radical peace platform. The judicatories must sentence men to death and to prison and this also seems impossible for most C.O.'s. The largest area of service seems administrative as in research, educational or welfare activities. This seems possible and desirable.

Here analysis will have to come to terms with the following realities:

1. Only Jesus Christ can be given absolute, unqualified allegience. This cannot be given to any human ruler or organization.

2. There will never be a fully Christian state since the state, by definition, uses force for the ultimate sanction of its demands and this conflicts with God's agape love as revealed in Jesus Christ.

3. The State, nevertheless, has a legitimate place in God's economy as a sub-Christian order to which we give qualified and conditional allegience, the latter to be withdrawn when issues of conscience arise either in separate issues or in terms of the general direction of the particular State in question.

4. A creative relation to the government is possible when there is mutual understanding and integrity between church and state.

Today the reformulation of this issue faces non-resistant Christians and many other Christians of different orientation who face the idolatrous claims of the modern State.

C. Theological

Wolfgang Schweitzer, a German Lutheran scholar, says that the only answer to theological disunity is to open the Bible and study it together. This is the method being used by the World Council of Churches. Any Mennonite position must make sense in terms of the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation. It must know the tools of interpretation it is using, it must face many approaches to nonresistance and ask for a defense in Biblical terms.

We have alienated many conservatives in the conference by failing to do this. They, in turn, have alienated many from conservative theology by unconvincing Biblical interpretations more in keeping with certain theological systems than the Bible itself.

It goes without saying that the attempt to limit the peace testimony to the Sermon on the Mount will not be acceptable. It will require us to show that the nonresistant love of the Cross is the heart of our position and that the discipleship of the peacemaker flows forth in gratitude for so great a salvation. And, that we love our enemies because God commended his love toward us while we were his enemies. It will require us to refute the dualism of the Lutheran and Catholic churches and the futurism of the ultra-dispensationalists.

In studying the Bible we will also want to study some of its great words such as love, grace, righteousness, sin, salvation and covenant. Whether by books, by doctrines, by words, by redemptive deeds, it can be shown that Christian love is the Alpha and Omega of the Biblical presentation and that nonresistance is applied love.

Obviously this suggests that not all the energy of Mennonite scholarship must go into church history. Our colleges and Seminary must devote much more time to this Biblical issue both in terms of the laity and more complex issues.

Love is message, incarnate in Christ. Love is also method as taught by Christ for every human relationship.

D. Inter-Mennonite or Mennonite Central Committee

The M.C.C. is still controversial in the General Conference. On the whole the Bible institute people are not sending personnel into the endless projects of M.C.C. More liberal members of the G.C., on the other hand, consider M.C.C. too conservative in its theology and too cautious in its tactics.

Actually, the M.C.C. is the only real inter-denominational achievement of American and Canadian Mennonites. For, the groups there assembled, though of similar origin historically, are as separate organically as any cluster or cross-section of denominations. Proof of this is our inability to commune together at the Lord's table.

The M.C.C. is five things: Christian service agency, Christian peace education agency, Christian political witness to governments, stimulator of missionary action among separate branch boards as in Puerto Rico and Belgium and inter-Mennonite planning agency as in the World Conference.

It is operating quietly but surely on a fairly clear position and the General Conference needs to know where it stands and why on all these matters. In doing so, let the conference beware of narrow suspicion and narrow sectarianism while maintaining its own integrity.

E. Ecumenical

How shall we communicate with other Christians? Here is the major weakness of all American Mennonites. Partly as German-speaking people, partly as small, isolated groups we have failed to do this.

Today, the National Association of Evangelicals, the American Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches compete for allegience. Locally, the issue is simpler. Almost to the man G.C. pastors belong to their local ministerial associations and preach in Union meetings and support Union projects of various kinds. There is little doubt that today by reason of our use of English, our educational development and our loss of inferiority complex, that we could speak beyond our church if we wanted to. This calls for much forebearance and understanding. But the command to teach all things makes it imperative at whatever level one is called to make the witness.

F. Tactical

Assume, for the moment, that all of us accept Christian nonresistance. Then come issues which one may call tactical: issues of how best to do what all want to do. These are things like the type of service: I-W or IAO; savings bonds; civil defense and the like.

The writer has followed the general MCC orientation in the above matters for the following reasons: (1) Mennonite history warns against the non-combatant position as the forerunner of a weakened position; (2) the American government has been a real pioneer in opening up new alternatives other than the traditional medical assignment in the army; (3) a veteran of any part of the army is considered a full recipient of the prizes, honors and organizational follow-ups of military duty, thus strengthening

the ties of our military culture in the post-war years. This, as over against deepened ties with the church; (4) church leadership has been most effectively recruited from the men who have not had military experience.

The problem of civilian defense under atomic warfare will be very acute. Properly handles it will permit us to identify with human suffering as no civilian status has ever permitted. Improperly handled, we could unwittingly be swept into a totalitarian set-up. Real statesmanship is required here.

These, then, are some of the issues we face. May the Lord use the Moundridge meetings to bring greater amounts of faith, hope and love among the peacemakers of the General Conference.

Gen. Conf. Peace Study Conference
Eden - April 10, 11, 1953

THE GOSPEL AND NONRESISTANCE

Arnold Nickel

"God that made the world and all things therein . . .hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth. . ." "The Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not; Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth . . . " "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you . . . " "Be ye therefore perfect . . . " "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not . . . " "And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God loveth his brother also."

These are some of the passages which point out the whole tenor of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All people have been created in God's image, are cared for by His divine order of the universe, are included in His plan of reconciliation, and are potential sons of God.

Present-day Christian and Philosophical Views of War

War is killing. War is wounding, maiming and destroying the life and goods of the opposition. The bases of war are conflicting ideologies, fear, greed, hate, power and profits.

In their beliefs concerning the Gospel and War, the majority of Christians find themselves in one of the following four camps. Permit me to paint with a broad brush.

First, the Christian Nationalists.

They are always waiting for the colors to fly, the drums to beat, and the cannons to roar. They are symbolized by Stephen Decatur's classic expression: "Our country: May she always be right . . . but our country, right or wrong!" These are the words of many Christians of America today. To these extreme nationalists Jesus was a militant crusader, one "Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." Did not Jesus say, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword"? Did He not bid His followers sell their garments and buy swords; or, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul"? To these militant nationalists Jesus stood forth as a great and courageous general and set the example of a good soldier by giving His own life for a worthy cause. For these people this is a holy war, as are all wars, and God is by our side in battle. "The Lord of Hosts!" "The Lord is a man of war."

Second, the Christian Loyalists

These are the Christians who are especially loyal to the state in times of crises. In this camp move the majority of God's children today. Its adherents are deeply religious and conscientious, and believe they are in God's will. They use the Sacred Scriptures more liberally and have outlined their theological position more advantageously than those of any other position.

Briefly, what do they believe? They believe that God sent His only begotten Son into the world to die for the sins of the world. They believe that man can be saved by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as the personal Saviour from all sin; that God alone is able to give man peace of heart and the assurance of eternal life in the world to come. They believe in the reality of sin and evil, and they believe man must deny all forms of worldliness and ungodliness. Many, but not all, of the Christian Loyalists have accepted and have convincingly taught that the Scriptures are inspired by God, that the contents of the Scriptures logically divide and apply to different periods of time, and that our present age is the age of Grace or the Church Age. This system allows them to set aside "idealistic" passages, such as the Sermon on the Mount, for some more appropriate dispensation than the present dispensation of the Church. Others, again not all, of the Christian Loyalists believe that the inspired Sacred Scriptures are applicable in total to every age, but that special considerations are necessary depending upon the threatening evils on the loose and other circumstances existing in a given period of time.

What do the Christian Loyalists believe concerning the place of love and non-resistance in relation to war? They believe war is killing; "War is hell." They recognize war as a monstrous and horrible evil. They, too, maintain to be conscientious objectors to war, But, war must be entered into to prevent worse evils because there is no other alternative. These believe that evil can be and must be conquered with the tools of Beelzebub, however, only as a last resort. "Expediency" is a hallowed thought-concept in their theological thinking.

The Christian Loyalists believe that the rulers of the nations are the ordained ministers of God to rule mankind and to suppress the evil doers. With many proof-texts they point out as Christians we should, nay, must, be obedient to the state when called upon to perform a given task, because the rulers are a channel for God's will to be exercised, and to refuse obedience to rulers is to disobey God's will.

What of the Loyalists' Christian ethics? Can a Christian love his enemy and kill him in battle? Yes! Can a Christian destroy his enemy's family and property when called upon by the proper authorities to do so? Yes! Is a Christian personally responsible for his actions as a soldier for his country? No, not when he is under orders and obeys his Superior military officials. Is a Christian under any obligation to God for the soul of the departed enemy? No, not necessarily. Every man's life is in God's hands and He has numbered his days. Does a Christian's ethic have a double standard? Yes! By and large God's children are directed through the inner voice of conscience, the ministry of the Church and the Holy Spirit; but there are also legitimate occasions when God's ministers of the state can rightfully demand the lives and energies of Christians for the cause of war

and the suppression of evil by means of the sword. War is inevitable as long as evil is present and what Christian is not duty-bound to help free mankind from godless tyranny? What really matters is whether the young man called into military service has accepted Christ as his Saviour and has the peace of God in his heart. The Loyalists firmly believe that Christians do serve God through obedience to the state in military efforts, and that they can be witnesses in the name of Jesus Christ as they go about killing, maiming, destroying in the name of the state.

Third, the Christian-Rational Pacifists.

Often this view is considered as a "reverence for life." In its extreme form this position forbids to harm any animate creature. All life is sacred. But in a less extreme form this view can be rationalized within the categorical-imperative concept. The life of man is a part of the life of God, and to kill or destroy human life is to kill or destroy a part of God. Often the adherents of this position reason thus: "I would not kill a member of my immediate family regardless who would demand the act of me. And because I can not kill a member of my family I can not kill a person who belongs to any other family." This concept is carried through to its logical conclusion, hence including the entire human race. War is destroying that which we love most. War never accomplishes the desired good, and hence we can have no part in it. This Christian-Rational position is a growing position in our world today because of the sense of futility that war leaves in its wake, and the possibility of global destruction.

Fourth, Christian Nonresistance.

Does the Bible teach war or peace? Does the Gospel of Jesus Christ include a place for armed conflict? Does Jesus Christ ever command His followers anywhere in recorded Scriptures to hate evildoers; to seek vengeance of enemies, to slay the ungodly? Does Jesus Christ endorse His children's program of retaliation by armed force anywhere in Holy Writ? Does the "Permissive Will" of God or His Son permit a child of God to participate in the program of killing and destroying enemy nations? Does the Gospel of Jesus Christ present a double standard of ethics -- one as a child of the Kingdom, and the other as a citizen of a nation? Or does the Bible not speak clearly on the question of war and peace?

The Gospel of Jesus Christ clearly teaches that "God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This basic teaching of salvation states that God sent His Son to save a lost world and not to condemn and destroy a disobedient and enemy world. If this is God's plan for a sin-darkened world; can His program for His children in the world be other than to bear witness to His saving love? The Bible is consistent in its teaching and all Scripture points to and finds its centrality in Jesus Christ.

A number of New Testament verses teach unqualified love for and nonresistance to evil man as the divine ethic for Christian believers. Among these passages are: Matt. 5:38-48; Luke 6:27-36; John 18:36; Romans 12:17-21; I Thess. 5:15; II Tim. 2:24; Hebrews 12:14; I Peter 2:20-23; 3:8,9,13-17; I John 3:14-15. These verses require no interpretation, they are perfectly clear. In a simple acceptance of this clear guidance in the New Testament as the Christian ethic, Mennonites oppose the use of force in private life and also reject military service in every form. All war is contrary to the perfect

will of God, and to the principles set forth in His Holy Word. There is no dualism in the principles of Jesus. He does not propose one set of ethics for churchmen and another for statesmen.

Some may raise the question: How about the interpretation of the many Scripture passages which do not as clearly set forth the teaching of nonresistance as the above listed texts, or the passages that even seem to teach a viewpoint in support of war?

The Mennonite Church teaches that God through Christ is the central source of New Testament authority. Jesus is the key which unlocks the treasures of the New Testament. The Old Testament clusters around Him. "The solid ground for New Testament authority is that God spoke His Word through Jesus." The Old Testament is the sacred record of man's experiences of God and of His revelation of Himself. The Old Testament reveals a constant growth in man's understanding of God's character. Throughout history God desired that man might know Him as He really is. It is first in the New Testament that we see the perfect and complete expression of the nature of God revealed in Jesus Christ; therefore the Old Testament should be studied in the light of the New.

There are three fundamental teachings which summarize the Gospel and Nonresistance. They are: First, love of God and love for neighbor. Christians find little difficulty with the teaching of love to God, but the second command, which is like unto it, is more perplexing for many. Jesus taught that one's neighbor is not defined in terms of geography or color, but all people are to be considered as worthy of justice and goodwill. It means doing good unto others, preaching the gospel to those who do not know it, and giving one's self sacrificially that others might have life. In reality it means equality of opportunity, economically, socially, intellectually, and spiritually. And this is the road to peace. No one can take from a Christian the one great treasure, the love we exercise without the demand to love. "Unless we learn to love without demand of love, war is a perpetual inevitability, war, that monster whom we have equipped with claws of unbelievable deadliness. Living without demand of love is the only means to prevent speedy and complete disaster to the whole world." -- Bernard Iddings Bell.

Second, God is the loving, merciful Father of all races and nations. God is the creator of us all, and all are to become His dear sons. Jesus Christ recognizes each soul as having infinite value. To the sinner, God is more than a judge and ruler. God is merciful, self-giving, and "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth." Love of man, love of God, and God's impartial love of all peoples do not leave any room for war. War changes love of neighbor into hate. War makes God a partial and tribal deity instead of a loving heavenly Father.

Third, Nonresistance is the sacrificial way of life which governs all human relationships, and is not a negative principle of action. It is the innocent suffering for the guilty to redeem the guilty, rather than seeking revenge and fighting back. The principle of the cross does not mean acquiescence in evil, but to deal with sin of all kinds and bring about desirable changes through the power of forgiving and suffering love. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

The Biblical doctrine of nonresistance is a fruit of the Gospel, but it is also much more, it is at the very heart of the Gospel. The heart of this teaching is that once having been laid hold of by God through Christ in the salvation experience, the Christian cannot withhold his unrestricted obedience, but must follow Christ in all things. He must pay the complete price of discipleship. He considers the commands of Christ and the principles set forth in the Gospel not to be mere counsels to be accepted or rejected as may seem good at the moment, but rather imperatives which must be followed to the end. If war and its evils are not taken out of the world, it will not be because the Gospel is not clear in its teachings, but either because men reject the Gospel or so-called Christians will not live that Gospel and take up the cross of utter discipleship laid upon them by the Lord.

The Biblical doctrine of nonresistance is the test of a genuine experience of salvation and discipleship. The judgment of God rests upon those who disregard this teaching as much as it does upon those who neglect some other divine command. The Christ of the Gospel and non-resistant love confronts us all, and all who claim Him as Saviour and Lord must give their answer.

THE GOSPEL AND NONRESISTANCE

H.D. Burkholder

Preface

During my early ministry in Pennsylvania I subscribed primarily to the non-combatant position relative to the problem of war. The booklet, "Should God's People Partake in War" by Rev. Theodore H. Epp (booklet available at News Press, Inman, Kansas) presented such conclusive Scriptural evidence from both the Old Testament and New Testament, that it caused me to change completely to the I-O position.

Today I am personally convinced that it is impossible for me to have any part with the military machine. The love of Christ shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Spirit does not allow me to help send unsaved souls into a Christless eternity. Instead, it is my sincere desire to manifest a positive witness by bringing lost souls to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

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THE GOSPEL AND NONRESISTANCE

H. D. Burkholder

The purpose of this paper is to present a clear definition of the Gospel, of Nonresistance, and how the two are related.

THE GOSPEL

The word "gospel" is the translation of the N.T. greek word, "eùaggèlion". The prefix "eù" meant in classical greek, "well" or "good" in its kind, as opposed to the greek word "kakos", which meant "bad or evil" in its kind. The suffix, "aggello" meant "to bear a message, to bring a message of good news", and the noun (eúggèllo) simply means "good news".

"The inspired Biblical writers were directed to use the word "eùaggèlion" while announcing the good news of salvation. In other words the gospel is associated with the salvation of a sinner. It proclaims a message of good news to those who are under the dominion and power of sin. The word "gospel" implies that man is in need of good news." (K. Wuest)

The Scriptural definition for the gospel is presented by the Apostle Paul in I Cor. 15:1-4. Please note: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures:"

The first fact of the gospel is the actual death of Christ. The word died is "apethanen" and is used in the following other inspired statements: "In due time Christ died for us;" "...to this end Christ both died and rose;" "...Jesus died and rose again." These passages tell us how our Lord actually died on the cross. In spite of these clear statements, in a fairly recent and scholarly treatment of the resurrection the author devotes a third of his volume to the support of the swoon theory.

The Biblical explanation of the gospel also includes the necessary death of Christ. The Corinthian passage reads: "how that Christ died for sins." It was by one man (Adam) that sin entered into the world. Before that man committed sin God said: "In the day thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die" (Heb, muth wayemuth). Someone has said: "There has been no reduction in the wages of sin". The full amount had to be paid.

Throughout the O.T. God's prerequisite for reconciliation was a blood sacrifice. However, the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. Therefore God prepared a body for His Son, our Lord Jesus. Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all the wages of sin -- death -- was paid. Hence the gospel includes the necessary death of our Lord. "Christ died for sins".

In order for Him to provide a satisfactory atonement it was necessary that he be without sin. Hear the testimony of Peter who spent three years in the intimate presence of the Lord: "Who did no sin neither was guile found in His mouth." Hear the witness of John who also spent three years of intimacy with Jesus: "In Him is no sin." The author of Hebrews agrees with this in the words: He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Listen to our Lord's words directed at the Pharisees: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" In the light of this Biblical evidence the gospel is also the substitutionary death of our Lord Jesus. "Christ died for our sins."

The gospel is more than the actual, necessary and substitutionary death of Christ. It is also His prophetic death. He died "for our sins according to the Scriptures." When seized in Gethsemane He disclaimed both earthly or heavenly aid on the grounds that the Scriptures must be fulfilled. Describing the crucifixion Matthew and John tell us: "And they crucified Him, and parted His garments casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, they parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots." John informs us that failure to break His bones as well as the piercing of His side was in fulfillment of predictive Scripture.

Please note our resurrected Lord's message to the two disciples along the Emmaus road: "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

Finally, the gospel, as explained in the Word of God, is the actual, necessary, substitutionary, prophetic - - and victorious death of Christ. For "He was buried and ... He arose again the third day."

Our Lord was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Holy Spirit, by the resurrection from the dead." He is not a dead Christ. He is a living Saviour.

The gospel is therefore the good news that Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification. The fact of His resurrection assures us that His death was accepted by the Father, and that henceforth He (the Father) will be able to maintain His Holiness whenever He justifies a guilty sinner.

Of this gospel Paul writes: "It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." In other words, to experience the benefits of the gospel we must believe it and then preach it.

Man is a sinner by nature. David said, "In sin did my mother conceive me." This does not imply that child-bearing is sin, but emphasizes the transference of a sinful nature from one generation to the next. This truth is amplified in Rom. 5:12, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; even so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." It is because of this natural sinful condition that Jesus said: "Ye must be born again." The gospel, which includes the death of Christ for sin and His resurrection for our justification, is the good news which every sinner needs but does not always accept.

THE NEW LIFE ... NONRESISTANCE

When the Lord Jesus is received as Saviour the one receiving Him as such becomes a child of God (see John 1:12). Before this he was outside of Christ but now he is in Christ. "And if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17). The gospel of good news produces a new nature. II Peter 1:4. Man's new nature makes him subject to new laws and standards of character: "That ye put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). Here is the realization of the new laws of relationships which were offered in the announcement of the coming new Kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount. "Too often we advocate this new law of relationship as attainable in an unregenerated world. The transforming gospel must be preached and received before these ideals can be properly upheld. The Sermon on the Mount was addressed to His disciples and not to men in general." (J.B. Toews)

It is also to the new man in Christ that these words are spoken: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, humbleness of mind, kindness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." (Col.3:10-14).

In I Corinthians 13, the new life created in righteousness and true holiness is a love described as "longsuffering and kind, a love which envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things" (J.B. Toews).

PRACTICAL NONRESISTANCE

The new life in Christ Jesus cannot be hateful or revengeful. It cannot participate in warfare of any kind. This includes the cold war of tongue lashing as well as the hot lead from gun fire.

We are alarmed, and rightly so, by the fact that the majority of our young men are going into military service. However, have we been equally alarmed by the lack of nonresistant principles in other phases of life?

We are to love our enemies; but are we not also to love the brethren? If it is difficult to love the brethren within a church fellowship, how can one succeed in loving the enemy on the battlefield: "Love suffereth long" but our tempers get mighty short. One of the greatest needs among born again people is the manifestation of a spirit of love. Love is the first thing mentioned in Gal. 5:22,23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." However, according to Rom. 5:5 this love is not developed or stirred up, but is "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." Thank God for the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of Christians. In Gal. 5:16 we are challenged to "Walk in the Spirit, and we shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

The works of the flesh are described in Gal. 5:19 and include adultery, drunkenness, hatred, wrath and wars, while the fruit of the Spirit, including love and longsuffering, is mentioned in verses 22 and 23.

The Spirit filled life is a life of victory. A life, which by the power of the indwelling Spirit, is able to remain sweet under pressure. It is a love-life which radiates the love of Christ. One of the greatest needs among Christians, including Mennonites, is the ability to get along in human relationships. Most of us are plagued with the same weaknesses as James and John, two of our Lord's disciples.

In Mark 9:38-40 these two brethren returned from a series of meetings. Upon reporting on the results they mentioned an incident which occurred along the way. e.g. They had met a preacher who was conducting meetings without their sanction. In other words, since he was not approved by the Board of Disciples they closed his campaign and sent him on his way. The reply of our Lord was a direct rebuke against secterianism, and a practical lesson on Biblical nonresistance -- "He that is not against me is for me." Beloved! We must also bring nonresistant practices into this area of application. These disciples needed to learn that the Lord has not limited His blessing to a particular group. Let us recognize this truth also.

Later on, these same two, James and John, were ready to call down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans (Luke 9:51-56). Yes, the disciples of Jesus, including the one who spent much time on the bosom of the Saviour, lost their tempers and manifested a spirit of resistance against the enemies of Christ. I repeat, "Love suffereth long" but our tempers get mighty short. After these brethren were filled with the Holy Spirit they gained the victory over the flesh.

The Spirit-filled life will gain victory over the spirit of resistance, hatred, vengeance and war. We need more teaching on the direct command of Eph. 5:18: "Be ye, being filled with the Spirit."

We will never solve our personal problems by excusing them on a cultural or psychological basis. I am not blind to these basic problems, as related to a cultural background and a psychological maladjustment, but in the person of the Holy Spirit I see the PLUS of victory.

If we teach that war is sin we must be consistent and teach that hatred and evil speaking are just as sinful. Both are inconsistent to the Spirit-filled life. Unless the Holy Spirit is able to produce His fruit (the fruit of the Spirit) in the born again person, including nonresistance in practical every day living, it will be impossible for us to succeed in impressing this truth upon our people relative to war. Quarreling church members who refuse to talk with each other, groups who use political schemes to gain their ends, are a hindrance to the presentation of Biblical nonresistance.

How can one speak on nonresistant love when in actual practice he is guilty of wounding a Christian brother who is true to the Word of God? Brethren! These things ought not so to be.

RESISTANCE

In conclusion, it is important to remember that the term "non-resistance" has a Biblical alternative, namely - "resistance". There are some things a Christian must resist. James 4:7: "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." I Peter 5:9 continues this thought - "Whom resist steadfast in the faith." The latter verse suggests that Satan opposes "the faith". This fact is supported by the other Scripture. The Christian is therefore challenged to "resist the devil" in all his endeavors to undermine personal faith in "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." However, while we are encouraged to "contend for the faith" (Jude 3), we are nevertheless to maintain a spirit of love in doing so, and avoid becoming contentious which is inconsistent with the Spirit-filled life.

In summary, I have tried to present "The Gospel and Nonresistance" as follows in this paper: The gospel is the good news of salvation relative to the actual, necessary, substitutionary, prophetic and victorious death of Christ. This is indeed "good news" to man lost in sin, who apart from salvation is "dead", in "darkness", "without hope and without God in this world." When this "good news" is accepted - involving repentance from sin and an acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour - the individual passes "out of death into life" (John 5:24) and becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus (II Cor. 5:17). This new life in Christ will manifest many fruits or Christian graces; among them a love for the brethren as well as a love for the enemy. The fruit of Gal. 5:22 is not self produced but is referred to as "the fruit of the Spirit - fruit produced by the Spirit. According to Rom. 5:5, "The love of God" is said to be "shed abroad by the Holy Spirit." In other words, the Spirit-filled life is a love-filled life and is in my estimation the secret of practicing practical Bible non-resistance in all areas of life.

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THE GOSPEL AND NONRESISTANCE

Erland Waltner

Definition of Terms

The crucial issue in this topic probably lies in a clear definition of terms. Confucius may have been quite right in insisting that much social confusion arises out of a failure to define "names" or "terms" clearly, as occurs when different people use different terms to mean the same thing or use the same terms to mean different things.

The problem of definition in this case is complex. The particular approach used is likely to determine the outcome. Shall we place our main emphasis upon a study of roots and derivations? Or shall we concentrate upon the apparent meanings in biblical usage? Or shall we listen to the changing and sometimes conflicting usage of terms in current vernacular? Recognizing that all three approaches have a validity, we shall use primarily the second, assuming that whatever so-called "gospels" there may be we want to know what the gospel is according to the New Testament, and whatever ideas of non-resistance may exist we want to know the New Testament Concept of non-resistance.

We shall here also make the further assumption that the New Testament basically proclaims but one true gospel. In this we would differ from those who have argued that Paul preached a gospel different than the other apostles. In this we would take our stand with Kittel and Dodd that essentially the gospel preached by Paul was the same as that proclaimed by Peter and John and the others.

We thus also differ with those who would argue that the gospel which Jesus preached, the gospel of the kingdom, was essentially different from that which Paul preached, the gospel of Grace. Whatever differences existed in terminology and orientation are due to the historical context, (that is, before or after the crucifixion and resurrection), rather than to a basic difference in essence. We would thus hold with Paul that there is but one true gospel (Gal. 1:8) variously called "the gospel of God", "the Gospel of Christ", "the gospel of the kingdom", or simply "the gospel".

What, then, is this gospel? Probably no human restatement of definition is ever adequate because it is likely to remain incomplete. In fact, our greatest difficulty arises at the point of giving fragmented definitions which come short of stating the "whole gospel".

Paul gives us at least two good definitions, one in Romans 1:1-4 and the other in I Cor. 15:1-4, but it is notable that in the first he omits reference to the atoning death of Christ which is so clear in the second, while in the second he makes no reference to the incarnation which is so clearly emphasized in the first. Any attempt to define the "whole gospel" may therefore not be limited to a single passage or two but must consider the use of the term gospel throughout the entire New Testament.

In the light of such a study it is perfectly clear that the essence of the gospel is Jesus Christ. He is not merely the messenger, He is in a real sense the message. The proclamation of the gospel by the apostles was

the proclamation of Jesus Christ -- His coming, His living, His teaching, His dying, His rising, His ascending and His coming again.

But the New Testament gospel could not stop with a mere recital of the historical events involving Jesus Christ -- the things which he said and did and what happened to Him. It had to include also an interpretation of these events and thus especially in the early apostolic preaching, in the writings of Paul and of John the gospel comes to include the proclamation that in Jesus Christ the Sovereign, Gracious love of God was manifested (John 3:16, Rom. 5:8, II Cor. 5:18-21, I John 4:7-11) reaching down to redeem sinful lost human beings to bring them into a newness of life which is both abundant and eternal. This Salvation is a free gift of God, appropriated by personal faith and manifests itself in a life of love and good works. (Eph. 2:8-10; Gal. 5:6; I John 3:11 & 14; 4:7 & 8.)

What now is non-resistance? Here we encounter difficulty because the term in this form does not occur in the New Testament but is derived from Matt. 5:39 "Resist not evil", probably meaning "resist not evil with evil". A simple working definition of non-resistance is to call it "the negative aspect of Christian love." Non-resistance is that which Christian love does not do as it encounters evil.

Christian love obviously has its positive side. Jesus taught that in loving our enemies we are to bless those who curse us, to do good to those who hate us, and to pray for those who despitefully use us and persecute us (Matt. 5:44), in short, to overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:21). But love also has its negative side. It does not resist evil by striking back (Matt. 5:39), nor does it answer reviling with reviling (I Peter 3:9), nor does it insist on asserting its full rights (I Cor. 13:5). In short, Love hurts nobody (Rom. 13:10, Philips). This is biblical non-resistance.

The Interrelationship

It now becomes evident that the vital link between a biblical definition of the gospel and a biblical concept of non-resistance lies in the nature and necessity of Christian love. The New Testament clearly asserts that men who have experienced the redeeming agape of God in the Lord Jesus Christ are to manifest the same quality of Divine love in human relationships. This, in fact, is made a test of genuine faith and fellowship (I John 2:9; 3:10; 14; 4:7,8; Matt. 5:44-47).

The Divine love becomes operative in the Christian not by imitation but by the indwelling of God's spirit (Rom. 5:5). When the Holy Spirit is permitted free course He produces the fruit of love (Gal. 5:22). The negative aspect of this love is non-resistance.

What now is the particular quality of the Divine agape which was manifest in Christ, became the ground of our redemption, and is now to be reproduced by the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian?

Divine agape, as the Lundesian theologians have made so clear, is spontaneous and, therefore, unlimited and universal. It does not arise out of, nor depend upon, the attractiveness or responsiveness of the object loved, but out of that which is in the heart of the lover. God loves us before we love him. God's love reaches out to the sinner before the sinner loves God (Rom. 5:8, Matt.5:45). It is an unprimed "artesian-well" kind of love. Apart from it, who could be saved?

Now the inspired logic of John is that if we have been loved with such love we are in turn to love our fellow men who are also the objects of this same love of God and are his potential spiritual children. If God loved us while we were his enemies, we must love our enemies, applying both the positive and the negative aspect of love.

Divine agape is also marked by holiness, or purity. It neither ignores, tolerates, or condones sin in any form. It is engaged in an irreconcilable conflict with evil. (Aulén). God's holiness is a loving holiness, but His love is also a holy love. If it were not so, it would cease to be true love.

This implies that Christian love and non-resistance can never be an ignoring, tolerating or condoning of evil in men or in the world. It can never be a closing of the eyes to the stark reality of sin in the human heart or in society. It too must be engaged in an irreconcilable conflict with evil in the world, but only in a spirit and by methods which are consistent with its own nature.

If at this point it is argued that God's holiness at times becomes the basis of His wrath which issues in judgment and the destruction of the wicked, let it be noted clearly that while the Christian is frequently called upon to love as God loves, he is not called upon to destroy but is reminded that this is the prerogative of God who says "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." (Rom. 12:19).

Divine agape is also marked by activity. Its essential activity is redemption, including forgiveness and restoration. The implication is that Christian love and non-resistance, to retain the agape character, must necessarily remain active. The concern must be for the redemption of men. This implies that non-resistance can never stand alone. It must be a part of something that is larger than itself. To separate non-resistance from its larger gospel context is to make of it a heresy. A heresy might be defined as a nugget of truth broken off from the main body and inflated to an abnormal size.

Some Implications

If non-resistance is an integral part of the full-orbed New Testament gospel how much emphasis should be given to it in our teaching and preaching? One answer might be that it should have the same proportionate emphasis in the church's teaching as it has in the New Testament as a whole. If this norm were followed, the doctrine would certainly receive considerably more emphasis in some churches than it does now. On the other hand, may it not be that historical situations arise when it may be necessary to lift out one facet of the gospel for special emphasis, either because it has been neglected by other groups or because it is particularly relevant to a present problem. If such situations do arise, and they probably do, it is however important to remember even then that the truth of love and nonresistance ought always to be presented in its proper gospel context. Let it always be clear that love and non-resistance are the fruit and not the root of the gospel.

The question also arises as to what part the Christian should take in working toward more peaceful relations in the world and the removal of the causes of war. This problem has many ramifications which cannot be discussed here.

In attempting to answer this question, is not the example of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the early church our safest guide? To say that Jesus and the apostles were indifferent to the social, economic and political needs of their day would be to overlook many explicit teachings of our Lord and probably also to misunderstand the implications of the establishment of the Kingdom. On the other hand it is evident that neither Jesus nor the apostles approached the social problems of their time, including war, by a direct method of social and political reform. Their method was indirect and their arena of reconstruction was sinful human hearts. The solution was the regeneration of sinful man through the acceptance of the gospel of God's transforming grace. Their emphasis and concentration of effort was clearly upon a vital program of evangelism making known this gospel to the ends of the earth.

This by no means rules out a Christian concern for the improvement of the social order nor properly orientated efforts along this line. The Christians obligation to alleviate human suffering is made very clear in the New Testament. Moreover, if what we have said about agape love is true, the Christian must be in combat with sin wherever it is found, whether in the individual human heart or in the social order. But the Great Commission, illustrated and ratified in the example of Jesus and the apostles, would seem to make quite clear what is the primary task of the church, what its areas of concentration must be, and by what methods it will achieve its greatest results in the perspective of eternity.

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HOW THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH LOST THE PEACE POSITION

Harley Stucky

Introduction

We, as Christians, have committed ourselves to look to Jesus Christ, as He is revealed in the Scriptures, to discover the norms of Christianity. We need to do this in all areas, and particularly with reference to peace and war, which is the great ethical problem of the twentieth century. But even when we turn to Christ, our consternation increases because the answers He gives, at least as they are interpreted by various segments of modern Christendom, are confusing, and frankly, contradictory. Some picture Him as a great crusader, others say He spoke not a word on the subject, and still others believe that he enunciated an ethic of love which is clear and direct. Perhaps, we can clear up this confusion by answering a number of problems. First, we must determine whether Jesus faced this issue of peace and war, during His life time, or whether His words of admonition were the "pious expression" of an arm chair idealist? Secondly, we ought to find out how the early disciples interpreted His teachings. What did they think He said, and how much significance did they attach to it? We must then mirror our own interpretation of His teachings, against that of the early Christians. And finally, if there has been any deviation from this interpretation, we should know where along the line the early witness was discarded and why. These then, are the problems before us, Did Christ face the issue? How did they, the early disciples, understand his Teaching and finally, what deviations have been made on Christian witness in subsequent centuries, and why?

I. The Jewish Question

Did Jesus face the issue of war and peace? Were there any tyrants, or any Quislings in His day? Or did He command His followers to "love their enemies" from an ivory tower, because he thought it was an ideal that was worthy? To answer these questions it is necessary to reconstruct the political setting in which Jesus lived.

When the Persians, under Cyrus the Great, allowed the Jews to return from Exile in 539 B.C., they re-established Jerusalem and set up a small theocratic state governed by priests. Finally, in the second century B.C., the Jewish hope, for a return to glorious day of David and Solomon, seemed on the verge of realization, when the Jews, under the leadership of Judas Mattathias, and with aid of Rome, managed to establish an independent kingdom. During the next hundred years, the Maccabees fashioned a Jewish Palestine, of considerable pretensions, out of Judaea. Beginning in 65 B.C. when Pompey intervened in the civil war between Hyrcanus, supported by the Pharisees, and Aristobulus supported by the Sadducees, an evil wind beset the little Kingdom. When the followers of Hyrcanus opened the gates of Jerusalem to Pompey, the followers of Aristobulus fortified themselves within the Tempel Mount, which in turn, was besieged until it finally fell in 63 B.C. The fall of the Temple was marked by the slaughter of 12,000 Jews.[1] Thereafter, Judah was cut to pieces by the Roman legions and divided into five regions, namely, Jerusalem, Gezer, Hamath, Jericho, and Sepphoris. Repeatedly the followers of Aristobulus took to arms,

but always they were crushed mercilessly. For example, at the conclusion of one such revolt, which occurred in 53-51, B.C., 30,000 Jews were carried into slavery.[2]

During the period of the First and Second Roman Triumvirates from 59 to 27 B.C., Palestine changed masters four times and guerilla bands, patriotic terrorists, and bandits, hiding in mountains, caves, and city strongholds, roamed the countryside. This period of anarchy and sanguinary wars came to an end when Herod the Great finally emerged triumphant in 37 B.C.

Herod the Great was one of the strongest, ablest, and at the same time one of the bloodiest and cruelest rulers in Jewish History. When he first appeared on the scene, the Galileans were drowning his sympathizers in the Lake of Galilee, while he and his troops were besieging Jerusalem. When his soldiers, and those of the Romans, finally entered the city, they spared none, and men, women, and children, old and young in the houses, markets, streets and even in the temple were slaughtered like sheep. Josephus tells us that "Herod's soldiers did their utmost that not a man from the other side be left alive![3] His own soldiers were surpassed, in their violence, only by the Romans, so that even Herod the Great asked Sosius, the Roman General: ""Would the Romans deprive the city of all its inhabitants and possessions and leave me a king of the wilderness?"[4]

Although popular among the Gentiles, and befriended by many Jews of the Dispersion, Herod was hated in Judaea. He was despised for his despotism, his heathen temples, the games and races which he sponsored, his ignoble origin (he came from the stock of Idumaea and was a descendent of Esau. Until the bitter end the Judeans contemptuously referred to him as "the Idumaean slave", although the Roman Senate had given him the title "King of the Jews."), his unfortunate temperament, and merciless executions. Herod stained his hands with the blood, not only of his enemies, but of his dearest kin, friends, (He had ten wives.)[5] and all who opposed him, until Augustus exclaimed: "Better to be Herod's swine than his son!"[6] It was he that issued the order that all the children of Bethlehem were to be slain.[7] Every murder increased the hatred of his subjects and drove him deeper in despair.

But popularity is too sweet for the tyrant to forgo it, and to Herod it was particularly important, as he wished to appear before the Romans as a prince beloved by his people, so he rebuilt the Temple sparing neither labor nor expense. He began this work in 20 B.C. and dedicated it in 15 B.C., although workman continued to be occupied with its construction for a number of years thereafter.[8] To the horror of the pious Judaeans, a golden eagle, the symbol of Roman might, was hung over the principal entrance, so that even this event augmented Jewish hatred.

The smouldering hatred against the Edomite-Roman rule burst out like a volcano upon Herod's death, in 4 B.C., as riots, rebellion, tumult and confusion broke out from one end of the country to the other. Instead of mourning the death of Herod, the people mourned the death of Judas and Matthias and their forty disciples, whom Herod, in his last dying rage, had burned alive for removing the Golden Eagle from the great gate of the Temple. Archelaus, the oldest son of Herod,[9] sent his army hoping thereby that the peace might be kept, but, as might be expected, it had the contrary effect and when some of the Jews threw stones at the soldiers, they in turn fell upon the people, slaughtering 3,000 men in the Temple, side by side with their temple offerings.[10]

But this was only the beginning and for the next ten years the nation was torn between the intense nationalism and revolution on one hand, and military and political despotism on the other. What a setting for the Prince of Peace to be born into! Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the Shepherds were receptive to the message of the Angelic hosts, when they sang "Glory to God on earth, Peace, goodwill towards men."[11]

Having quelled the revolution, Archelaus slipped out to Rome to have himself approved as Herod's successor. Meanwhile, Sabinus, the treasurer of Augustus, came to Palestine to claim the treasures of Herod. The Judaenas resisted and hid themselves behind the Temple walls, whereupon the Romans set fire to the colonnades and with a terrific carnage slaughered and burned the defenders and then appropriated the Tempel treasures. Sabinus alone is said to have taken four hundred talents from the Tempel.[12]

The destruction of the halls of the Temple within ten years after its completion, the plundering of its treasures, and the desecration of the Holy of Holies, roused the indignation of the Jews still further. Revolutionary leaders arose -- simultaneously in many parts of the land, of which Judah, the Galilean, is perhaps the most important.[13] Near Sepphoris, only an hour's journey northwest from Nazareth he collected a large body of desperate nationalists,attached the king's armoury, seized the weapons and fought against all those, Jews or Gentiles, who opposed the idea of freedom. The revolt spread throughout all the provinces, Judaea, Idumaea, Galilee and beyond the Jordan and "no quarter was given to any Roman Legion or to any Herodian soldiers or to any body who did not enroll himself as a member of some nationalist party."[14] The revolt was crushed when Quintilius Varus, governor of Syria, came up with a strong Roman army, and after a severe struggle took the town of Sepphoris, set fire to it and sold the inhabitants into slavery. Then Varus threw his army against Jerusalem, whereupon most of the nationalists fled so that the city offered relatively little resistance. Nevertheless, Varus took two thousand prisoners and had them crucified.[15]

During the reign of Archelaus, from 4 B.C. to 6 A.D., a period which marks the early childhood of Jesus, one rebellion followed another until Augustus banished Archelaus to Gaul. Undoubtedly these events made a profound impression on the mind of Jesus, because they were the events that people talked about in their homes, in their shops, at the market place, at the synagogue and wherever they met. What else could they talk about, when all about them there were crosses, symbolizing the failure of the method of revolt. In the four generations of Roman rule following Pompey's capture of Jerusalem, "no year passed without its toll of lives, and gibbets and crosses at every cross-road proclaimed the foolhardiness of the Zealots who continued to defy the Roman legions."[16] It was in these years of political despair and Messianic hope, for many had turned for solace to the promise of the prophets, that the life and ministry of Jesus fell.[17]

With the banishment of Archelaus, Rome determined to end the policy of native rulers for Palestine and placed the country under a procurator, who was directly responsible to the Emperor. With this change came other innovations. All public decuments, marriages, deeds of divorce, wills, etc. were now to be dated according to the year of the Roman Emperor, and new taxes were levied, so that the Jews continued to be incensed. Under all the procurators, good and bad alike, the land was seething with rebellion. The

Zealots and other extremists, whose slogan was "No God but Yahweh, no tax but to the Temple," shrank at nothing to bring their heathen masters down. The crucifixions which followed every unseccessful flouting of imperial power had the effect of arousing avengers, who fought on until they too hung in agony on a public gibbet. Ultimately Roman patience gave way, and measures of barbarous severity were introduced, but to no avail, for it seemed as though the entire land was seized by a fevor of martyrdom.[18]

The Jewish experience with Pilate who became procurator in 26 A.D., is illustrative of this struggle. He had his soldiers smuggle the Imperial standards bearing Tiberius" image into the Holy City at night. Incensed by this insult, many Jews flocked to Caesarea and besought him to have the imperial standards removed. For five days Pilate remained obdurate. On the sixth day the mob was surrounded by soldiers. According to Josephus they were instructed to "cut in pieces unless they (the Jews) would admit of Caesar's images," whereupon the Jews fell down and bared their necks and cried out that they would sooner be slain than that their laws should be transgressed.[19] Pilate, the tyrant, was abashed at their display of moral courage and gave way. The second major encounter occurred when Pilate took some of the Temple treasure, the corban, to build an aqueduct for Jerusalem. When the people objected he had his soldiers beat them and many were slain.[20] On another occasion, Tiberius forced Pilate to remove the shields which he had placed in Herod's palace. There were other clashes, among which the reference of Luke 13:1 is undoubtedly one.[21] Pilate was finally dismissed by Vitellus, the governor of Syria, and summoned to Rome to justify himself, in 36 A.D., for his extreme cruelty towards an assembly of Samaritans in the village of Tirathana, where a self-styled prophet declared that he knew the spot where Moses had buried their sacred vessels under Mount Gerizim.[22]

Having ignored the teachings of Jesus Christ, the tempo of the conflict increased as the years rolled on. Each overt act on the part of the Jewish population brought stricter supervision, and this in turn provoked greater opposition. Treacherous McCarthyism was rampant too, when the Alexandrian Greeks, hoping to secure the favor of Emperor Caius Caligula Germanicus (37-49) A.D., accused the Jews of disloyalty and demanded that they should show divine honors to the images of the emperor. A Judaean envoy was sent to present their case before the King. Caligula greeted them with jarring reproof: "So you are the despisers of God, who will not recognize me as the deity, but who prefer worshipping a nameless one, whilst all my other subjects have accepted me as their god.[23] When the Jewish envoys declared that they had made three successive offerings in his honor, Caligula answered: "That may be, but the offering were made for me and not to me".[24] Caligula then ordered the governor of Syria, Petronius, to erect the imperial statues in the synogogues, and in the Temple of Jerusalem. Petronius, and his legions, were at the outskirts of Jerusalem when the edict was recalled because of the death of Caligula, and the efforts of the Judaean king Agrippa.

Agrippa then proceeded with imagination and energy to strengthen Jerusalem, and obtained permission from Emperor Claudius to fortify the city. Although Agrippa died shortly thereafter perhaps this gave the Jews a measure of confidence as they continued the conflict, through the years 49 to 66 A.D. Finally, when Florus seized seventeen talents from the Temple, the masses insulted him by begging coppers for the impoverished procurator, whereupon he sacked the upper city killing more than six hundred Jews.[25] Almost immediately the great National rebellion broke out, which for the Jews was a Holy war.

In the first engagement the Jews defeated Cestius Gallus, the Syrian proconsul at Antioch, who had besieged the city for six months. Nero now dispatched Vespasian, a trusted and capable officer, who had covered himself with glory on the battlefields of Germany and Britain, with fifty thousand men to crush the uprising. When Nero died, Vespasian after a brief civil war, became the Roman Emperor and he sent his son Titus to complete the work of crushing the revolt. He used the ballista, a gigantic sling shot, which threw stones weighing a hundred and twenty-five pounds more than a quarter of a mile into the city. Thousands of Jews died of famine and plague in the besieged city, and such as tried to slip out at night for food, were captured by the vigilant Romans and crucified, five hundred and more in a night.[26] Finally, the outer wall fell, then the second wall, then the third, but the survivors withdrew to the Temple. For six days the battering-rams pounded at the holy citadel, before it was taken, by infuriated soldiers who burnt it to the ground and butchered all whom they found. Of those who survived, thousands were transported to fight wild beasts in Roman amphitheatres, or condemned to slave labor,[27] and some were preserved to grace the triumphant procession of the victorious general in Rome.

But even so, the Jews continued to resist, and when Hadrian (117-138 A.D.), placed circumcision in the forbidden list of crimes and announced his plans to rebuild Jerusalem, as the seat of Roman culture, known as Aelia Capitolina, in honour of the patron god of Rome, the Jews rose in their final revolt against Rome. (132-135 A.D.). Every village and hamlet throughout the land rose to expel the Roman legions from their land, forever, they hoped. They had some success in the beginning but the Roman legions returned, and after conquering this obnoxious little kingdom tried to make sure that they would never again be capable of revolting. A half million Jews were slaughtered and the remainder were forbidden on pain of death ever again to set foot in Jerusalem[28] and the entire province was renamed Syria Palestina. On the site of the sancturay, a Temple was built, in honor of Jupiter Capitolinus, and on the south gate of the city was placed the head of a boar, the emblem of the tenth legion. From that day to 1949 the Jews were a wandering people without a homeland. This should have been to them a permanent reminder of the folly of their method and the wisdom of Christ.

I've related this story at some length because we need to remember the setting in which Jesus Christ lived and taught. Joseph Klausner, the great Jewish scholar, summarized the period as follows:

> Such was the political condition of affairs during Jesus' lifetime and during the generation that preceded him, from the outbreak of the war between the brothers Hyrcanus and Aristobulus to the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate in Judaea and the reign of Herod Antipas in Galilee (from 67 B.C. to 39 C.E.). Scarcely a year went by during this century without wars or other disturbances; wars, rebellions, outbreaks and riots, and all of them with their concomitant of incessant bloodshed; and this state of things prevailed in the Land of Israel throughout the whole epoch which preceded Jesus and prevailed also during his lifetime. ...
>
> Were we to count up one by one those who fell in the wars and rebellions and those murdered by Herod and the Procurators during this dreadful century, we should reach a total of not less than two hundred thousand men--- an appalling number for such a comparatively small country. . .[29]

Living in the midst of this setting, Jesus knew the reality of violence and nationalism. He had seen the tyranny of Herod and the Roman procurators -- men whose despotism is comparable to that of Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin -- and he knew of the great national hope of his people -- to be delivered from this yoke of bondage and slavery. The great Jewish-Christian Scholar, Alfred Edersheim, says that we must take this intense nationalism into account in the life of Jesus. He reminds us that one of His disciples belonged to the Zealots, at one time, and that significant events in the life of Jesus synchronize with the political crises of the day. He reminds us that Jesus went to the Temple, at the age of twelve, after the taxing and Galilean rebellion under Judas, and that he began his public ministry with the acession of Pilate.[30] No, Jesus is not an arm-chair idealist who could speak of love because he didn't know the reality of violence. Jesus is a realist, who looking upon the plight of his people, and recognizing his own divine mission as the Son of God, declared that the only hope is an ethical monotheism.

Jesus knew that his people were looking for a Messiah who would deliver them from foreign bondage. Ever since the exile, they were looking for a political Messiah - - a great national deliverer who would arise from the stem of David, who would throw off the yoke of bondage and restore again the throne of David to its ancient glory. Sometimes this concept was tied to that of apocalypticism, whereby the Messiah was pictured as coming out of Heaven with a heavenly host. There would be great judgements, the wicked would be destroyed and a heavenly kingdom would be established with Jerusalem as its capital.

Jesus rejected these conceptions of Messiahship. Instead of a Messiah which would ride rough shod over all the people, He, as the Messiah, would give his life, so that they might live. Instead of a great and utter destruction of the wicked, he spoke of unlimited forgiveness[31] and redemptive sufferings pictured by Isaiah. Instead of violence and nationalism, Jesus came proclaiming a two fold commandment, that men should love God with every faculty and act in love towards all men, friend or enemy, and should suffer persecution rather than administer persecution.

He spoke of the necessity of an inner experience, of a new mind, a new heart and a new will. Man is free only when mind is motivated by truth and the heart by love. It is fear that builds armies and navies, but "perfect love casteth out fear" because there is no fear in love.[32] Only God in the hearts of men can bring about the restoration.

Jesus had a difficult time to dessentangle His concept of Messiahship, which came from God and represented truth incarnate, from the false concepts of the Messiah held by his people. You can see how difficult this was, when one notes that the wrong concepts kept cropping up again and again even among his disciples, to the very end of his earthly ministry. Even on Ascension Day, they (the disciples -- his followers) asked Him, "Lord wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?"[33]

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1. Klausner, Joseph, *Jesus of Nazareth: His Life, Times and Teaching,* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1944), p. 138

2. *Ibid.*, p. 139

3. Klausner, p. 144

4. *Ibid.*

5. Oesterley, W.O.E., *A History of Israel, From the Fall of Jerusalem, 586 B.C. to the Bar-Kokhba Revolt A.D. 135*, Vol. II, 373-74

6. Sacher

7. Matthew 2:16

8. Graetz, Heinrich, *History of the Jews, From the Reign of Hyrcanus (135 B.C.E.) to the Completion of the Babylonian Talmud (500 C.E.)* Vol II... says the dedication occurred 20th Anniversary or his capturing Jerusalem which was the 27th Anniversary of Pompey's Conquest in 63 B.C. See pp. 66, 88, 111.

9. Herod had divided his kingdom among three sons, Archelaus, the eldest, who was assigned Judaea, Samaria, and the outlying Idumaean territory; Antipas, who to be the tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea; and Jewish districts east of the Jordan; and Philip, who was to be the tetrarch of the more northerly districts of Batanaea, Trachonitis, and Auranitis. There was a bitter feud however, between Antipas and Archelaus and Philip.

10. Josephus, Flavius, *The Wars of the Jews*, translated by William Whiston, New York: E.P. Dutton and Co. p. 119.

11. Luke 2:14.

12. Graetz, Vol. II, p. 124.

13. Klausner, p. 156. Apparently, complete anarchy prevailed. Klausner cites Josephus as characterizing the situation in these words: "In those days, Judaea was filled with bands of marauders; wherever a malcontent crowd assembled, they elected them a king." This incident, along with others, is reported in Acts 5:35-37.

14. Klausner, p. 156

15. Graetz, Vol II, p. 126

16. Sachar, Abram Leon, *A History of the Jews*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1930, p. 124.

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.* p. 117.

19. Josephus, p. 141.

20. Ibid.

21. Luke 13:1 reads "Now there were some present at that very season who told Him (Jesus) of the Falileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices."

22. Oesterly p. 388, Graetz, p. 171-72

23. Graetz, II, 187.

24. Ibid.

25. Sachar, p. 117.

26. Ibid, p. 123

27. Robinson, Charles, Alexander, Ancient History, from Prehistoric Times to the Death of Justinian, New York: Macmillan Co. 1951, p. 628, declares that 100,000 Jewish slaves were brought to Rome.

28. Sachar, p. 123

29. Klausner, p. 167.

30. Edersheim, Alfred, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, New York: E.R. Herrick & Co., 1883, Vol. I, p. 242.

31. Luke 17:4

32. John 4:18

33. Acts 1:6

II. The Witness of the Early Christians

But having been taught certain things, does not of necessity mean that they were accepted and so we must still ask, whether the early Christians really believed that they were to love their enemies? Did they attempt to live as He taught or did they suggest that His message was only applicable to a future heavenly state? How did they react under pressure in a crises situation? Did they catch His vision? Did they distinguish between a political and suffering Messiah?

There seems to be ample evidence to prove that, again and again the early Christians were called upon to witness for their faith. Increasingly they found themselves in opposition to the prevailing social, political and religious currents of thought, because of their loyalty to Christ. They had been taught that they were to "obey God rather than men."[1] That they must "love their enemies," and that salvation came neither through nationalism, or the use of force, but rather through faith and love. Jesus had repudiated Jewish nationalism and had spoken well of the Syrians, Samaritans, Romans, and Greeks. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that the Temple authorities, Annas, Caiphas, John, and Alevander soon recognized that the growing Christian movement endangered their authority, position and purse.[2]

Believing in the Good News, a life of love, and unlimited forgiveness[3], the Early Church did catch something of His vision, and His purpose, and His methods. They turned the world upside down, which is realy right side up, in this case, with their faith and ethical concepts, among which was the conviction that it is unlawful to shed the blood of a fellow-human being, either by the sword of justice or by that of war. They demonstrated this faith again and again, both in the Jewish and Roman world, during the first four centuries. They refused to be stampeded by nationalism or to participate in the rebellions and demonstrations against the Romans. They did not participate in the national uprising, from 66 to 70 A.D., and prior to the seige of Jerusalem, left the city and moved to Pella, beyond the Jordan. In the revolt of Bar Cochba (132-135 A.D.) they again took the non-resistant position. From the Jewish point of view, these rebellions were "holy wars", inspired by a desire to vindicate their enemies and prove the superiority of their God. The refusal of the Christians, who were of the same racial and national background, to participate was looked upon as treasonable and cowardly conduct, and led to some persecution of the Jewish Christians. But even more significant, is the fact that these events raised an unsurmountable wall between the two groups, so that to this very day the Jews, who never forgave the Christians, are among the most obstinate groups, in so far as conversion to Christianity is concerned.[1]

The Christian witness in the Roman empire, was identical with that given in Palestine, on this subject. The Christians had a message to proclaim and could not share this "calling" (to be a Christian) with any other profession, least of all with one that seemed incompatible. They could not be convinced that it was lawful, on any occasion to shed blood, either by the sword of justice or by that of war, even though the barbarians should threaten the peace and safety of the entire community. "Some indulgence might be allowed to those persons who before their conversion were already engaged in such violent and sangionary occupations; but it was impossible that those Christians, without renouncing a more sacred duty, could assume the function of soldiers, of magistrates, or of princes.[2]

I shall permit a few of the early Christians to speak, in order that we might understand the nature of their faith. Paul's theology hinges on the faith that Christ gave His life precisely for those who manifest hositility and hatred toward Him. (Rom. 5:6-10) More than this, Christians are obliged to carry on in a hostile world the same ministry of reconciliation. (2 Cor. 5:14-21, Eph. 2, 13-32). Christians are obliged to love... "Bless those who persecute you ... Repay no one evil for evil ... If possible... live peaceably with all ... Overcome evil with good." "If your enemy is hungry feed him." (Rom. 12:14-21) Going beyond the New Testament, we find Justin Martyr, in 140 A.D., saying, "from Jerusalem 12 men went out into all the world ... They told every race that they had been sent by Christ to teach all men the word of God. And we who were formerly slayers of one another, not only do we not make war upon our enemies, but for the sake of neither lying nor deceiving those who examine us, gladly die confessing Christ."[6] In another Dialogue, he continues by saying "and we, who had been filled with war and mutual slaughter and every wickedness, have each one -- all the world over -- changed the instruments of war, the swords into ploughs and the spears into farming instruments, and we cultivate piety, righteousness, love for men, faith, (and) the hope which is from the Father Himself through the Crucified One."[7] A little later, around 180 A.D., Irenaeus expressed his convictions that Christians must not participate in war. Harnack, an eminent scholar of early Christianity, in his book Militia Christi, contends that the early Christians could not enter the military profession because they had renounced war and the shedding of blood, secondly because they would have been unable to comply with the occasional duty of officers to pass the sentence of death; and thirdly, because the soldiers oath of absolute obedience was incompatible with absolute obedience to God.[8]

Around 200 A.D., Tertullian advised Christians to stay out of or abandon military service. Tertullian asks: "Shall it be held lawful to make an occupation of the sword, when the Lord proclaims that he who uses the sword shall perish by the sword? And shall the Son of peace take part in battle when it does not become him even to sue at Law? And shall he apply the chain and the prison, and the torture, and the punishment, who is not the avenger even of his own wrongs?"[9]

Tertullian leaves the soldier two alternatives, either "leave the service or suffer martyrdom."[10] He argues that there is no agreement between the divine and human 'sacramentum' (soldiers oath), the standard of Christ and the standard of the devil, the camp of light and the camp of darkness. One soul cannot be due two lords -- God and Caesar."[11] He bases his pacifism on the sayings of Jesus, when he said "If we are enjoined, then, to love our enemies, ... whom have we to hate? If injured we are forbidden to retaliate lest we become as bad ourselves."[12]

In the first half of the third century, Origen writes that "we have come in accordance with the counsels of Jesus to put down our warlike and arrogant swords of argument into ploughshares, and we convert into sickles the spears we formerly used in fighting."[13] In another place he says; "We (Christians) no longer take up sword against nation, nor do we learn war any more, having become children of peace for the sake of Jesus who is our Leader."[14] In the conflict of loyalties between Church and state, he takes an uncompromising position, and declares "we do not serve as soldiers under the emperor, even though he require it."[15]

Cyprian, the great bishop of Carthage who died a martyr in 258 A.C., followed in this same succession, emphasizing, however, that killing men in battle is no different than murder: "The whole world is wet with mutual blood, and murder, which in the case of the individual is admitted to be a crime, is called a virtue when it is committed wholesale."[16] Lactantuis, who near the end of his life was appointed by Constantine as tutor to his son and heir, Crispus, writing a year or two before the decision at Arles, insisted that there is no difference between warfare or murder. "It will neither be lawful for a just man to engage in warfare... nor to accuse anyone of a capital charge, because it makes no difference whether you put a man to death by word or by the sword, since it is an act of putting to death itself which is prohibited."[17]

Many other witnesses could be cited, but the above group is sufficient to emphasize the position of the early Christians and to call attention to the radical effects of conversion to Christ. Again and again the testimony is that we who formerly hated and destroyed now endeavor to live in peace and to overcome evil with good, because of Christ. Perhaps, the importance of Christ and the radical effects of conversion are best summarized by Justin, who declared:

> "We who hated and destroyed one another, and on account of their different manners would not live with men of a different tribe, since the coming of Christ, live familiarly with them, and pray for our enemies, and endeavor to persuade those who unjustly hate us to live conformably to the precepts of Christ."[18]

Being a body of believers, supremely loyal to Christ, the Christians abhorred the unqualified military oath, and refused to let the church become the recruiting office or Christianity the "religion of the camp".[19] From the New Testament period to the decade of 170-180 A.D. there is no evidence of Christians in the Army.[20] Although the evidence of Christians in the Army increases from the days of the Thundering Legion, under Marchus Aurelius, in 173 A.D., to the time of Constantine, (313-337 A.D.) the number so involved is generally believed to be rather small, as the persecutions and weight of Christian testimony, during the period, is definitely against this practice. As late as the 4th century many left the army on the grounds of incompatibility,[21] while others suffered martyrdom for the faith. Marnius, a military officer, was beheaded at Caesarea in 260 A.D. because he was a Christian.[22] In 295 A.D. the martyrdom of Maximilianus occurred because he had refused to don the soldier's uniform, even though he had been told by the Roman procounsul that their were often Christians in the ranks, to which he simply replied, "They know what is fitting for them, but I am a Christian, and I cannot do evil."[23]

The reaction of the early Christians to evil doers, and persecutors was essentially the same. Jesus was mocked, spat upon, scourged, and crucified, Stephen was stoned and James was executed, and other disciples suffered a similar fate. Paul endured a long prison confinement. Still later, being a Christian was a crime against society punishable by death. But, whether persecution was deserved or undeserved, they refused to counter attack, or to make a strenous effort to save their friends, or to strike back when plundered and robbed. Thus, Tertullian assures his contempories that while there are enough Christians to avenge the enemy, yet there is no danger because they are commanded to love their enemies and are absolutely forbidden to repay evil

for evil.[24] Athenagaras says they do not strike back when struck, nor go to law when plundered and robbed.[25] Armobius, speaking to pagans, argues for non-resistance, saying, "we . . . have received it from His teachings and laws, that evil ought not be repaid with evil, that it is better to endure wrong than to inflict it, to shed one's own (blood) rather than stain one's hand and conscience with the blood of another."[26]

Nevertheless, there are indications of a gradual and growing tolerance towards soldiering from the decade of 170-180 A.D. to the time of Constantine (313-337 A.D.) in the early part of the Fourth Century. In 314 A.D., which is shortly after the official toleration of Christianity, the Council of Arles decided in favor of the excommunication of "those who throw away their weapons in peace."[27] It is highly probable that this was a gesture of gratitude to Constantine who was heralded as a great deliverer.

Under Constantine the die was recast, and that which previously had been condemned was advocated and championed, at least by some individuals. Athanasius, about 350 A.D., "the father of orthodoxy", declared that it was not only lawful but praiseworthy to kill one's enemies in war.[28] Ambrose (375 A.D.) declared that the courage which protects the homeland in war or against brigands, "is full of righteousness."[29] St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.) while declaring that one cannot "think of war without feeling sore pain", systematically and effectively defends the legitimacy of militarism. By 416 A.D. the marriage of church and state had been consumated and non-Christians were forbidden to serve in the army.[30]

It must not be supposed that the pacifist witness capitulated immediately after the Council of Arles, as many individuals and segments of the church continued the old faith. In the final crucial test Christian convictions had to be expressed not merely through pronouncements, but through personal witness and many a resolute individual, including Martin, who later became Bishop of Tours (371-396),[31] declared "I am a Christian and therefore I cannot." Moreover, there were large sections of the Christian community, where the decision of the Council of Arles was not accepted. The "Testament of our Lord", compiled in Syria or southeastern Asia Minor about 350 A.D. or shortly thereafter, forbids a soldier to be baptized unless he leaves the service, and forbids a Christian to become a soldier on pain of excommunication.[32] The Eguptian Church-Order and the Hippolytean Canons introduce further relaxations, but still point to the incompatibility of soldiering with Christianity. As late as 374, Basil the great, required those who participated in killing to abstain from communion for three years.[33] It is evident from this that in many quarters, the settlement was accepted only gradually and with an uneasy conscience.

The prevailing pacifist testimony and practice of the early church, in the face of popular criticism, and official persecution, could have been maintained only because Christians believed, whether rightly or wrongly, that their Lord required this of them. It is possible, but hardly probable, that the early Christians misinterpreted the mind of Christ, and that Athanasius, Ambrose, and Augustine made the correct interpretation. Even the suggestion would be unthinkable, were it not for the periodic attempts which have been made, ever since the time of Augustine to find that Christ and the early Christians either sanctioned fighting, or at least did not strictly include the refusal to do so in those sayings which teach non-resistance or advocate love toward all, friend or enemy.[34] With such attempts to enlist Christ's teachings in support of armed defense of the state the testimony and practice of the early Christians stands in sharpest contrast.

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1. Acts 5:29 2. Acts 4:6 3. Luke 17:4

[illegible] agoras says they do not strike back when struck, or go to [illegible] ed and robbed.[25] Arnobius, speaking to pagans, argues for [illegible], saying, "We [illegible] have received it from His teachings [illegible] that evil [illegible] repaid with [illegible] than to inflict it, to shed one's own (blood) [illegible] conscience with the blood of another."

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Under Constantine the tide was reversed and that which previously had been condemned was advocated and championed, at least by [illegible] Athanasius, about 350 A.D., "the Father of [illegible] dox [illegible] only lawful but praiseworthy to kill one's enemies."[28] [illegible] A.D.) declared that the courage which [illegible] in war and against brigands, "is full of [illegible]"[29] [illegible] Augustine [illegible] while declaring that one cannot "think of [illegible] systematically and effectively defends the [illegible] itimacy [illegible] militaris[illegible] 416 A.D. the privileges of church and state [illegible] [illegible] ians [illegible] forbidden to serve in the army.

It must not be supposed that the one first increase [illegible] immediately after the Council of Arles, as many individuals [illegible] the church continued the old faith. In the [illegible] al [illegible] ed to be expressed not merely through pronouncements [illegible] many a resolute individual, includ[illegible] [illegible] hop of Tours (321-396)[31] declared "I a[illegible] and [illegible] recover, [illegible] were [illegible] one of [illegible] Christian [illegible] decision of the Council of Arles was not accepted [illegible] Lord" compiled in Syria or southeastern [illegible] about [illegible] only thereafter, forbids a soldier to be baptized unless he leave [illegible] and [illegible] Christian to become a [illegible] [32] The Egyptian Church Order [illegible] their relaxations, but still [illegible] with Christianity [illegible] late as [illegible] artery [illegible] duality [illegible]

[illegible] re [illegible] and [illegible] in, and official persecution, could [illegible] as believed, whether rightly or wrongly [illegible] It is possible, but hardly probable, that [illegible] not the mind of Christ, and that [illegible] correct interpretation. Even these exceptions [illegible] for the periodic attempts which have been [illegible] to find that Christ and the early Christ[illegible] did not strictly include the re[illegible] resistance or advocated love to[illegible] to either Christ's teachings [illegible]

4. Laury, R.H. "The Attitude of the Early Christians Toward War", M.A. Thesis Northwestern University, 1925, pp. 5-6.

5. Gibbon, Edward, Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. I (New York: Modern Library), p. 416.

6. Cadoux, John C., The Early Christian Attitude Towards War, (London: Headley Bros. pub., LTD., 1949) pp., 60-61.

7. Ibid., p. 61

8. Heering, G.J., The Fall of Christianity, (London: George Allen & Union, Ltd., 1930), p. 44

9. Heering, p. 49-50

10. Cadoux, p. 113-114

11. Heering, p. 50

12. Seitz, Oscar J.F., "Peace Activity in the Early Church and in the Gospels", in Peace is Possible, (Deep River, Conn: New Era Press, 1940) p. 36.

13. Cadoux p. 63

14. Yungblut, John R. "The Historical Continuity of Christian Pacifism", in Peace is Possible.

15. Ibid.

16. Seitz, p.33

17. Seitz, p. 31

18. Ibid, p. 35

19. Laury, R.H. "The Attitude of the Early Christians Toward War", p. 6. (A Masters Thesis at Northwestern University, 1925).

20. Bainton, Roland H. "The Early Church and War," in The Church, The Gospel and War, p. 77. Ed. by Rufus Jones, (New York: Harper & Bros., 194-) pp.77.

21. Cadoux, pp. 150-54

22. Ibid., p. 152

23. Heering, p. 53

24. Cadoux p. 79

25. Ibid. p. 76

26. Ibid., p. 65

27. Heering, p. 57. Cadoux refers to it as the Synod of Arelates.

28. Heering, p. 58 29. Ibid. p. 59 30. Cadoux, p. 257

31. Ibid,p. 260-261 32. Ibid., p. 259 33. Heering, p. 56

34. An example of this is Umphrey Lee's, The Historic Church and Mod.Pacifism.

Only Part III presented for discussion
at the [illegible] Conf. Peace Study Conference
[illegible] April 15 [illegible] 1953.

III. Reasons for the Decline of the Peace Witness

Harley Stucky

Gradually, under the subtle influences of [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible]ity of Christians came to believe that some wars were "just" and that [illegible]stians could participate with clear conscience. With the passage of time, [illegible]e Medieval Church with the exception of the monks [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]o abstain from war, became more and more [illegible]. [illegible] many of the [illegible]shops, who incidentally had become territorial magnates, raised their own armies and engaged in war. The Roman Catholic Church [illegible] [illegible] of the ar[illegible]or and his arms and officially sanctioned the crusades. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] church had condemned, the medieval church [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] factors had brought about this change? Why [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]?

The first concession, that broke the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the use of military [illegible], which was only natural [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]editerranean world was policed by Roman legions [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the soldier, his motives, and his equipment, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]agery, both in oral communication and in writing. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] introduced the military metaphors and similes. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] put on the breast plate of faith and love [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]tion as a helmet.[1] In his letter to the Ephesians [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]ipment of a soldier and parallels it with a Christian's [illegible] [illegible] to battle with evil.[2] Clement of Rome [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] leader and we are his soldiers."[3] Origen, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] experience for a soldier to return triumphant, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and great is the glory of returning in triumph [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] which he implies might be a heretic.

Paul uses this imagery to proclaim [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] no room for war. He used it to proclaim a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] that would best grip the heart and imaginations of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. The soldier, like the state, was incidental to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] spreading the Gospel of Christ. He might submit to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] it to his advantage and protection, but his chief [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] he might live for Christ and become a citizen of his [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

As a general rule, the [illegible] military [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] church fathers, does not mean that they accepted [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] war, or soldiering, but rather [illegible] that the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to Tertullian used it to [illegible] their [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible]

> [illegible] use of military [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to abuse and misconception. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] introduced itself. Thus, what [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] spiritual defense, the symbolic spiritual [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] a physical weapon. A final danger [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] theology in [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] cross and sword.[4]

A second concession, which [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. This idea [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] by war waged by [illegible] [illegible] had led the [illegible]

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Eden--April 10, 11, 1953.

III. Reasons for the Decline of the Peace Witness

Harley Stucky

Gradually, under the subtle influence of altered circumstances, the majority of Christians came to believe that some wars were "just" and that Christians could participate with clear conscience. With the passage of time, the Medieval Church with the exception of the monks who by and large continued to abstain from war, became more and more belligerent until many of its bishops, who incidentally had become territorial magnates, owned their own armies and engaged in war. The Roman Catholic Church gave its blessing to the warrior and his arms and officially sanctioned the crusades. Thus what the early church had condemned, the medieval church approved and often advocated. What factors had brought about this change? Why did the peace witness collapse?

The first concession, that broke the chain of absolute pacifism, was the use of military terminology, which was only natural, since the entire Mediterranean world was policed by Roman legions. Everyone was familiar with the soldier, his method, and his equipment. Everyone understood martial imagery, both in oral communication and in writing. Apparently, it was Paul who introduced the military metaphors and similes. He urged the Thessalonians to put on the breast plate of faith and love, and to take the hope of salvation as a helmet.[1] In his letter to the Ephesians, he enumerates the equipment of a soldier and parallels it with a Christian's equipment as he prepares to battle with evil.[2] Clement of Rome declared that, "Christ is our leader and we are his soldiers."[3] Cyprian, recognizing that it is a glorious experience for a soldier to return triumphant, he asks, "How much more excellent and great is the glory of returning in triumph to Paradise after conquering the devil;"[3a] which he implies might be a heretic.

Paul uses this imagery to proclaim a way of life which has no excuse and no room for war. He used it to proclaim a spiritual message in a "language that would best grip the heart and imaginations of the men of that time."[3b] The soldier, like the state, was incidental to Paul, whose whole heart was in spreading the Gospel of Christ. He might submit to the state and at times use it to his advantage and protection, but his great effort and desire was that he might live for Christ and become a citizen of the world that was to come.

As a general rule, the use of military terminology, by the early church fathers, does not mean that they accepted military ideals or approved of war, or soldiering, but rather indicates that the Christian teachers from Paul to Tertullian used it to spread their message. Nevertheless, a frequent and unrestricted use of military metaphors is not without danger for it lends itself too easily to abuse and misconception. It bring with it the danger that the symbol will introduce itself. Thus, when a weapon is held up to symbolize our spiritual defense, the symbolic spiritual weapon frequently degenerates into a physical weapon. A final danger with reference to the use of military terminology is that it brings a "warlike disposition which threatens the role of meekness and peace."[4]

A second concession, which prevented an absolute disapproval of war was apocalypticism. This idea of divine chastisement must be added. Such and a victorious war waged by the Messiah made a total rejection of war impossible. God had led the Israelites to war and had punished them for their

iniquity, hence the exile, the dispersion, and destruction of Jerusalem. To this belief of divine chastisement must be added the concept of the Christ who would come again and establish his kingdom and rule by force. In that day there will be a terrible bloodshed, but Christ will be victorious over kings and beasts alike. The author of Revelations would almost appear to be hostile, in his attitude, towards the Roman Government. He looks forward to the day when the Lord will destroy Rome, and avenge the suffering of the Christians. In the "apocryphal 'Acts of Paul,' the apostle tells Nero that Christ is going one day to make war upon the world with fire."[5] And Victorius of Petavium, in his commentary on the Apocalypse says: "Now the white horse... shows the Lord coming with a heavenly army ... at his coming all nations ... will fall by the sword."[6]

It is amazing that the early Christians did not infer from apocalypticism, that Christ himself was committed to a program of bloodshed to establish his Kingdom and that they might use violence as his co-horts, to punish wickedness and help Him in his objective. The fact that apocalypticism did not drive them to such methods, means either that it was a relatively sane type of apocalypticism, or else it means that the inspiration which they received from Christ, both in his teachings and life, centered on love towards God and man. They were committed to Him as Lord and Master, as well as Saviour, and as such could not water down the ethical standards which He demanded, with a militant apocalypticism.

③ Another gradual compromise among the early Christians was with reference to their function in society. In the earliest period, government was incidental and was a human institution, though it might be used of God. The early Christians recognized only one duty and that was to proclaim the Gospel. Government was incidental. Life was organized as though government didn't exist. This view point was modified somewhat by Paul, who exploited his Roman citizenship and experienced its protection. He felt that government had a vital function in maintaining order and retributing justice. As such, Governments were instituted by God and were a terror to evil.[7] Although it is true that the Christians were often persecuted, there were also times when Government protected them, and hence they began to recognize it as an institution of justice and righteousness.

There was a tendency to carry over the concept that government was an institution of God for the rendition of judical and civil law, to the question of war and peace. The fact that the police and the army were almost synonymous in the Roman empire, lent itself to an easy transferral of righteousness and justice in one field to the other. Eirenaios thought that armies were God's instruments of justice. Speaking of Jerusalem, he says, that God sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.[8] Also Origen gives a relative justification of war, by referring to the unification of the kingdoms for the advent of Christ. "The existence of many kingdoms would have been an obstacle to the extension of Jesus teaching to the whole world ... There was need that there should be war" to bring them together.[9]

Even in prayer there was a transition from the negative to the positive. The Christians who were commanded to pray for their enemies, prayed for the emperor and his subordinates, and for law and order. With reference to this last point, it must be said that it became relatively easy to pray for the efficiency and success of soldiers who administered justice and kept out the barbarian invaders.

Moreover, the Christians were challenged to show that they made a contribution to the state and that they were not mere parasites. Tertullian, Origen, and others defended the contribution of the Christians, and declared that through prayer, high ethical standards, and faithful adherence to law and order the Christians made a greater contribution than other members of society. Origen argued that "none fight better for the king than we do. We do not indeed fight under him, although he require it; but we fight on his behalf, forming a special army -- an army of piety -- by offering our prayers to God.[10]

Nevertheless, it takes depth of conviction to continually maintain that one is making a contribution in the area of the intagibles, when government officials and public opinion expect tangible participation.

Fourth, the experience with soldiers helped to rationalize, if not to modify and relax the original attitude. There were the penitent soldiers baptized by John the Baptist,[11] the centurion of Capernaum at whose faith Jesus marveled,[12] the centurion at the Cross who said, "Truly this man was the son of God."[13] There was the jailer at Philippi whom Paul had come to know and who had asked "What must I do to be saved?"[14] Basa, a soldier rebuked those who insulted the martyrs.[15] Eusebias of Laodicea obtained safety from a Roman General for those Christians who fled a besieged quarter of a town.[16] Origen visited the Emperor's mother under a military escort.[17] In these and many other instances the Christians had experienced the milk of human kindness among those whose vocation they rejected. It is even probable that there were Christian evangelists who engaged in the work of converting soldiers to Christianity.

5 A further concession toward acceptance of physical violence was made along the eastern frontier, where the Constantinian revolution was anticipated by a full century.[18] The Thundering Legion was recruited in southern Armenia. In Syria Abgar IX, the king of Edessa (179-216 A.D.) was converted to Christianity in 202 A.D. and for the remainder of his reign made it the official religion. It is scarcely possible to imagine that a ruler of a frontier province would have deprived himself of all military resources, by accepting a pacifist faith, unless the church was willing to be subservient.

The marriage of Church and state, however, was consumated under Constantine the Great, (313 to 337) the Christian Caesar, founder of Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire, and advocate of the imposing idea that church and state were two arms of one and the same divine government on earth. Few changes, if any, in the history of Christendom were as profound as those which he effected. Although his father willed the throne to him, it was necessary for him to fight his rivals. Prior to the Battle of Milvian bridge, he had a vision of the cross in the sky, with the inscription, "By this conquer." The following night Christ appeared to him in a dream, and urged him to have a standard prepared and to proceed with it against his enemies.[19] As a result, Constantine put the "Ch" for "Christos" on his soldiers swords and shields and made it the standard of his army. The Victory over Maxentius, in 312 A.D. at Milvian bridge, near Rome, confirmed his faith. In 323 A.D. when Constantine fought his last campaign against Licinin, his rival, he undertook it as a Christian Crusade against paganism, and inscribed the "laborum" on the coins, and "surrounded himself with Christian priests, prayed and had visions before the standard of the cross"[20] It is said, and I cite it as an illustration of his piety that, he turned the sacred nails of the Saviour's cross

which Helena brought from Jerusalem, into a bit for his war-horse and an ornament for his helmet.[21]

In the Edict of Milan, 313 A.D., Constantine granted toleration to Christianity, and provided for the restoration of the Christian communities largely destroyed by persecution. This was a significant step in the history of Christianity, but it was only beginning of Constantine's support. In the twenty-four years between Milan (313) and his death (337), Constantine adopted measure after measure increasing the prestige and privileges of Christianity. Christian clergy were given the privilege, already enjoyed by heathen priests, of exemption from civil burdens and taxes.[22] In a day when few pagans observed any calendar day as a day of rest, Constantine, noting the example of the Apostles, who observed the Lord's Supper on Sunday, issued a decree that "Sunday was to be kept as a holiday --- a day of rest." He offered a reduction in taxes and other benefits to cities that built Christian Churches, and himself, sponsored, erected, enlarged, and embellished, numerous Christian churches. In order to create more unity, within his Empire, he was instrumental in calling the Council of Nicea, and in having the Nicene and Apostles Creed written, which by the way, reflects all too little of the spirit of primitive Christianity. He was perfectly willing to adjudicate the Conatist case.

As a direct result of Constantine's efforts, the Christian church gained freedom, power, prestige, numbers, wealth, and positive support from the government. There was a feeling of mutual helpfulness and of striving, as co-laborers, toward a common goal on a common task. Having been persecuted, the Church now became the persecutor, having been poor it became rich and imperialistic, worldly and secular. Having been consecrated by a baptism of fire, it now was given the necessary boost to become ecumenical and universal. Instead of the fire of conviction and the depth and breadth of spirit, which characterized the early Christians, the priests now preached lovely things. Nevertheless, the change which had come over Christendom, is almost incomprehensible, and from the point of view of war, cannot be regarded other than a disastrous fall.[23]

Papanism, contributed toward the changed attitude with reference to war, for the pagan hordes who flocked into the Christian churches, were not assimilated, or acclimated to Christianity. While accepting the new faith they continued to cling to the concepts and customs of their primitive state, and hence, had no qualms about the vocation of soldiering. Moreover, many individuals in gratitude and appreciation for Constantine's generous attitude and support, willingly put themselves at the disposal of the Emperor. Thus, the Council of Arles, declared that those who throw away their weapons in time of peace shall be excommunicated." Thus, the "soldier of Christ became ipso facto a soldier of Caesar."

Through the Constantinian revolution, we have a further reason for the fall of Christianity, and that is that men had lost the vital Christian faith which characterized the Christian of the first centuries. Its ranks were filled with rice-Christians, who knew little or nothing of the concept of sacrificial love.

Then another reason for the fall of Christianity, is found in the writings of the church fathers, like Athanasius, Ambrose, and especially Augustine, because they, particularly Augustine, dominated Christian theology in Western Europe for nearly a 1000 years. But why did great thinkers like Augustine, reject non-resistance? Perhaps it is because he saw war as a police measure

against evildoers, as the defence of a peace-loving state against bloodthirsty neighbors. "The natural order of transitory things, which is most in conformity with peace, demands that authority and power to wage war shall be in the hands of the ruler, and in carrying out war-decrees the soldiers really serve the cause of peace and common good."[25] Perhaps it was because he defended the Christians against the charge of having caused the fall of Rome and of being parasites. He tried to say that Christians are good citizens who give effective aid in righteous or defensive wars. Perhaps it was because he visualized the City of Man merging with the City of God, and could not detect the line of demarcation. Perhaps it was because of his optimism that war can be conducted by good, and even by Christian means. We may forgive him at this point since he was not aware that in the life and death struggle of modern wars, men lose their humanity, to say nothing of their Christianity. Perhaps, it was because of his conflict with the Manichaeans. Perhaps it was that he like many others had become Christian in name before he became Christian in fact, and as such had not struggled or been indoctrinated in the Christian faith, and as such was somewhat naive on this matter. He says: "What cause yet is there for finding fault with war? Is it perchance because men perish in it; men who must needs die sometime? ... Of course, there are cruelties and vindictiveness ... But even "good men undertake wars, in obedience to God or some lawful authority, when they find themselves in such a position as regards the conduct of human affairs, that right conduct requires them to act, or to make others act, in this way."[26]

The final reason, for the collapse of the peace witness, occurred when the idea was institutionalized! In this respect, the history of Christianity is essentially similar to other movements, which have their starting point in the prophetic wisdom of some great soul, who is not afraid to break with conventions and traditions and to break forth with a "Thus saith the Lord." With the passage of time, his influence becomes more definite and powerful until enough earnest followers have accepted him as leader, caught his idea, and made his program theirs, to cause them to form themselves into an organization, dedicated specifically to the task of propagating the idea for which their leader lived. Usually, just about as soon as this happens the institution is more concerned with self-perpetuation than the idea which called it into being. Thus we face a cycle which is ever again repeating itself. The world's crying need being met by an inspired man whose idea is accepted and propagated by an increasing host of devoted followers; the followers forming an organization for the more efficient propagation of the idea; the organization turning into an institution and the instituion killing the idea.

So too with Christianity. Jesus came not as a law-giver, but as a teacher from God, who declared that the principle of love is inclusive of all other principles. Love is a spirit, an attitude of goodwill that cannot be regulated by law. Jesus did not establish any creed in the sense which we have come to know creeds. There is no evidence that he ever demanded assent to any set system of beliefs from any of those whom he asked to follow Him. Moreover, Jesus did not directly found an institution. Instead of law, he gave them principles; instead of creed faith in God and man; instead of an institution, a spirit; instead of an organization a fellowship. This was the beginning and essence of original Christianity. Laws, creeds, institutions, and organizations are not then part and parcel of the original fact, they are later accretions, or, at best, secondary derivatives, or it may even be that they are inevitable consequences of the basic spirit. But, whether important or not, the fact is that when laws, creeds, institutions, and organizations

are established they tend to kill the original idea, by focusing more and more on self preservation. So too, with the Christian Church, which especially after the period of Constantine, was more concerned about perpetuating the church, than the Christian witness of love.[27]

Summary

Summarizing then the ground that we have covered, we have found that Jesus lived in a turbulent period, but neither he nor his followers were swept away by the fires of nationalism. On the contrary, the existence of this condition, probably gave focus and meaning to His teaching, which was interpreted by his followers not as an interim ethic, but as an integral part of the Gospel. Love was the distinguishing mark of discipleship, and was to knit the church and community with Christ as its head, together.[28] The devotion to redeeming love provided the faith that evil could be restrained by means other than by force of arms. Slowly, however, the original inspiration wore off, and Christians found their way into the ranks of the army. The number, however, was small prior to Constantine. The Constantinian revolution with the help of a number of other factors, effected a major change and brought the concept that soldiering for Caesar and Christ were compatible. Although there were groups here and there which maintained the old position, the new position, endorsed by the Church fathers, rice-Christians and the state, won out. Irrespective of whether one regards this as a defeat or a victory for Christianity, one stands in awe of early Christianity, knowing that the Christian faith, ideals, influence and character were never spread more effectively. Those that lost their lives found them, "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit saith the Lord."

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1. I Thess. 5:8

2. Ephesians 6:12-18

3. Laury p. 36

3a. Cadoux p. 168

3b. Laury, p. 36

4. Cadoux, p. 169, Harnack advanced this argument in Militia Christi.

5. Cadoux, p. 180-81

6. Ibid, p. 182

7. Romans 13.

8. Cadoux, p. 205

9. Ibid, p. 207

10. Seitz, p. 34

11. Luke 3:14

12. Luke 7:2-10

13. Mark 15:39.

14. Acts 16:30

15. Cadoux p. 227

16. Ibid

17. Ibid.

18. Bainton, p. 82

19. Schaff, Philip, History of the Christian Church, (New York: Charles Schribner & Co., 1871), pp. 21-22.

20. Walsh, H. Pakenham, The Lights and Shades of Christendom to 1000 A.D., (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 126

21. Ibid., pp. 17-18

22. Walsh, p. 118.

23. Heering's Central thesis and title is--"The Fall of Christianity" See especially p. 57. There are some, including Roland Bainton, who feel that pacifists over-emphasize the Constantinian revolution, because, they say, the change was anticipated or would have come, in any case, with time, and sheer weight of numbers, if not otherwise. This argument, however, does not necessarily deny the tremendous import of the Constantinian revolution. Constantine's political creed is particularly significant, in my opinion, in this matter.

24. Heering, p. 57

25. Ibid, pp. 59-60

26. Heering, p. 61

27. The comments on institutionalizing Christianity come from Schilpp, Paul Arthur, Do we need a New Religion? (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1929), pp. 39-41

28. Latourette, Kenneth Scott, "Christianity and the Peace Movement", in The Church, The Gospel and War, p. 93

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THE ANABAPTIST REDISCOVERY

Robert C. Kreider

Is it not appropriate to inquire: "Why this thirty minutes on the program devoted to Anabaptist history?" Who among us has not at some time said: "Mennonite history -- it is all very interesting, but what has the Reformation and Menno Simons or in fact any church history to do with being a Christian?" "Is there not too much of the Old World with us, and the people looking back?" "Is it not enough simply to know and love the Bible and ignore those 1900 years between the time of Christ and the Apostles and our day?" It is true, Menno Simons and Conrad Grebel cannot substitute for us in doing our own thinking, believing, and witnessing. You and I have to do our own believing, just--as Martin Luther said--each one of us has to do his own dying. And yet, I am convinced, the stories of our Anabaptist heroes of the faith can help us to be more consecrated Christians. As I read the pages of Anabaptist history I find myself exclaiming: "Behold, here are signs of the Kingdom!" "Behold, here are men and women who have walked with God." But then in the history of the Church of Christ we also see tragic deviation from the Divine Plan.

Some teach as though we ought to imitate scrupulously every word, every act of our Mennonite forefathers. This we ought to make clear: Menno Simons is not our norm; Conrad Grebel is not our perfect standard. They were noble men, but they were imperfect men, who had their fears, their prejudices, their ambitions, their blind spots like you and me. Jesus Christ alone is our pattern, our norm. And yet these Anabaptist heroes were so vibrantly alive and earnest in their newly received faith, so conscious of the will of God for their lives that they have much to teach us as to what it means to have "the likeness of Christ."

We need not pause long to identify who were the Anabaptists. They were those children of the Reformation to whom discipleship to Christ was the regulative purpose of their lives and who covenanted together to form a gathered and disciplined church on the New Testament pattern. Among the radical sects of the Reformation they were the biblical, peaceful, evangelical, missionary-minded wing. I would invite you to observe particularly the movement in the area of Switzerland-South Germany where I have concentrated my studies--recognizing that the story of the Anabaptists in this area parallels closely the movements to be found to the northwest in the Low Countries, where under the leadership of Menno Simons they came to be known as Mennonites, and to the east in Moravia where under Jacob Hutter they were known as Hutterian Brethren.

The Anabaptists speak to our spiritual condition today, not so much in the detailed answers they offer to specific moral and theological problems, as in the way they sought to follow Christ. One cannot but be humbled by their conception of the task of discipleship, which to them was the bringing of the whole of life under the Lordship of Christ, and the transformation of this life, both personal and social, after his image."

One is impressed, first, with the way in which the Anabaptists were conscious of the immediacy, directness, and totality of the claim of

Christ on their lives. Their testimony is studded with such phrases as these: "Christ has taught". . . . "Christ prhohibits". . . . "Christ commands". . . "Christ calls" . . . "compelled of Christ". . . . "summoned of Christ" . . . . "the decision of God" . . . . "the ways of Christ" . . . . "the example of Christ" . . . . "the will of God" . . . . Read again that first statement of Anabaptist faith, the Schleitheim Confession of 1527, and one is impressed that they approached all the issues of life through Christ. Confronted by any new moral problem, the first question of the Anabaptist was always: "What is the command of Christ?" Note, for example, the final words of the Schleitheim Confession. The recipients of this confessional statement are admonished to "persevere without interruption in the known will of God." The Anabaptists acknowledged, thus, the primacy of the claims of God over the claims of government. They often quoted the words of Peter: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

Second, one observes the constancy and pervasiveness of Scripture in the letters, writings, and court testimony of the Anabaptists. Their speech was imbued with the Biblical idiom. They studied Scripture with avid devotion. As a matter of record the Anabaptists emerged in Switzerland out of upper-room groups meeting regularly for Bible study. It became widely recognized in governmental circles that only those could counsel effectively with the Anabaptists or stand up to them as equals in public debate who were solidly versed in Scripture. As Christ replied with Scripture to the tempting invitations of Satan, so the Anabaptists answered their critics with well-chosen words from the Bible. To the skeptics and the doubters the Anabaptists urged: "Come, join us, investigate the Scriptures so that your faith may not be founded on us nor on any other teacher or writer, but solely on Jesus Christ." They were impatient with all prudential and logical argumentation and all appeals to human authority. "Only show us God's Word," declared Menno Simons, "and the question is settled."

The Anabaptists differentiated themselves from the Protestant churchmen of their day in that they interpreted the Bible Christo-centrally. Again quoting Menno Simons: "All Scripture must be interpreted according to the spirit, teaching, walk, and example of Christ and the Apostles." The Old Testament, thus, was to be interpreted in the light of the New Testament. The Anabaptists were not, therefore, troubled with the justification of warfare to be found in the Old Testament. One Swiss brother explained it this way: "The fact that under the Old Covenant God has permitted His people the use of the sword does not concern or bind us, for the old law has been replaced by the new commandment of Christ that we should love our enemies." They considered themselves to be children of the New Covenant.

Third, the Anabaptists were profoundly conscious that they were essentially citizens of the Kingdom of Christ and not of this world. The chronicler, who recorded the first baptismal service in 1525, described it thus: "They together dedicated themselves to the name of the Lord in the high fear of God. Each ordained the other to the service of the Gospel, and they began to teach and keep the faith. Therewith was separation from the world and its evil works begun." They knew themselves to be a separated people--separated unto God. Michael Sattler, shortly before he was burned at the stake in 1527, wrote: "The Kingdom of Christ is not of this world, rather the world is in conflict with His Kingdom. The faithful are selected out of this world; therefore they are estranged from the world. They rest their trust completely in their Father in Heaven, hence have no need for visible and earthly armor." We may conclude,

then, that the Anabaptists were so immediately conscious of a life beyond this temporal existence that they had the inner fortitude to take the social ostracism, the suffering, even the death which was the price of their nonconformity to this world.

Fourth, the Anabaptists were not isolated individuals, alone in the world. They were members--not members, but disciples--in a holy brotherhood of whom Christ was head. Theirs was the church of the reborn. Those who had experienced a corporate awakening covenanted together to form a church. The symbol of the new church was believer's baptism. The church to them was a brotherhood with each one bearing responsibility in the fellowship. They called one another "brother". Theirs was a laymen's movement predicated on every brother being a confessing Christian and an active disciple. The brethren found comfort and strength in the intensely real fellowship of their brotherhood. Some of the most moving words from the Anabaptists are those letters of comfort and encouragement which were sent by the brethren in prison to their brotherhood outside. One such letter written by prisoners in the Witch Tower of Zurich concludes with these words: "Encourage one another and have fear for nothing, neither force nor sword, for God will be with you. . . " The Anabaptists could yield to the total claims of Christ because they knew themselves to be in the center of the will of God ("Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.") and second, they knew that they were not alone; they were members together of the elect fellowship of God. To maintain the brotherhood as a believing, acting, committed core of disciples, they taught and practiced the use of Scriptural discipline.

Fifth, the Anabaptists were children of the Great Commission. Every Anabaptist was a missionary of the Gospel--and the Gospel in all its totality and concreteness. As one reads the court records one is amazed at the ability of even the most humble Anabaptist to give eloquent reason for the faith which lay within him. Further, one is astonished at the intrepidity of the Anabaptists in seeking out leaders high in church and state to witness to them about the claims of Christ for their own souls and for the social order. The Anabaptists were a fellowship of missionaries. Every member of the brotherhood had etched into his consciousness the words of Christ:

> Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Gost: Teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you.

Sixth, they saw the true church of God as a suffering church. "History is the contest between the people of God and the powers of the world, a contest which presses to a final decision through the suffering of the martyrs." This consciousness of being one of the community living under the sign of the Cross gave these early Anabaptists a fortitude beyond human dimensions. Their contagious missionary zeal and their joy in the fires of martyrdom must be seen in this context. Listen to the words of a group of earnest brethren in Zurich writing in 1524 to Thomas Muentzer, whom they thought was night unto the Kingdom, but who had not renounced the sword:

> True Christian believers are sheep among wolves, sheep for the slaughter; they must be baptized in anguish and affliction, tribulation, persecution, suffering, and death; they must be

> tried with fire, and must reach the fatherland of eternal rest, not by killing their bodily enemies, but by overcoming spiritual foes. . . . They use neither worldly sword nor war, for among them killing is done away with altogether.

One may observe in passing that this non resistance was based, not on the prudential considerations of Erasmian pacifism, but upon a conception of the suffering church.

These were the Anabaptists. Not all, of course, lived on this level of high commitment. Some recanted their hard won faith "out of weakness of the flesh." But at their best these were the Anabaptists: consciously committed to doing the will of God, immersed in a knowledge and love of Scripture, acknowledging the primacy of their citizenship in heaven, brothers one of another in a holy, disciplined fellowship, witnessing to the world as children of the Great Commission, and living without fear under the shadow of the Cross.

What did these Anabaptists--who sought to be first-century Christians--have to say concerning war, peace, and nonresistance? If you were to glean the documents and place all Anabaptist statements on war and peace end to end I dare say that not one-twentieth, not even one-hundredth of the written record would be devoted to this subject. Is that not startling? The very founders of this historic peace church giving such slight attention to the peace testimony! And yet one hastens to add that there was not one public official, one state churchman who did not know that every Anabaptist completely renounced all military service and all use of violence. Every Anabaptist was nonresistant--that was universally acknowledged. One chronicler writes of the Anabaptists of his town, St. Gall: "They carried no weapons, no sword or other weapon, nothing more than a pointless bread knife, saying that these things belonged to the wolf's nature and should not be found on the sheep."

We may appropriately inquire: on what foundations did the Anabaptists rest their teaching and practice of nonresistance? Their first and all-sufficient reason was a simple one: Christ had forbidden his followers to use the sword. They were His followers. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ." Second, they added that a Christian "suffers rather than resists evil." Recently a handwritten document, bearing the date of April 12, 1529, was discovered in the attic of an Anabaptist family in the Emmental of Switzerland. This remarkable treatise from the earliest years of the Anabaptist movement speaks eloquently of the suffering capacity of the true Child of God:

> The Kingdom of Christ is spiritual. It is the Christian Church. This "kingdom of peace" is composed of all who have become one in faith through the word of the Lord, look unto Christ, and seek to become conformable to the Lord. They do not quarrel, go to war, go to law, nor harm anyone. They kill no one. Such a people are called the peaceful people. Christ, the king of peace puts his peace in the depth of the hearts of His own. The children of peace have peace with everyone, harm no one in any respect, neither in body nor in goods, but endure at the hands of all men all kinds of injustice which may be done to them; yea, for the love of Christ they love their enemies, do good to them and pray for them. . . . Even if the world rise up

> against them, rages and storms against them yet they rage and storm against none. Those who adhere to Christ, "the suffering lamb," will destroy no one, neither the heathen nor any man at all, neither with the punishment of the law nor with a worldly sword nor with anything, yea they kill no one. . . .

What more need one say concerning the peace convictions of the Anabaptists?

In the early sixteenth century military service did not then have the universal compulsory character which made of it an acute problem for sensitive minded souls. No evidence can be found that the Anabaptists engaged in military service. A slight suggestion of an exception is that of two Anabaptists from Waldshut who refused combatant duty but offered noncombatant service to their beleaguered town. The town preferred to banish the pair. Balthasar Hubmaier, an Anabaptist, was a lone voice raised in defense of the Christian's use of the sword. More of an immediate, crucial issue to the Anabaptists than warfare and military service was the magistrate's use of the sword to punish dissenters and evil doers. All Anabaptists strenuously protested against physical coercion in matters of faith. To the burgomaster of St. Gall Conrad Grebel implored: "Beware, beware of innocent blood." The prevailing conviction among Anabaptists was that the civil authorities should abandon the use of capital punishment in the handling not only of religious dissenters but also of common criminals.

The Anabaptists were confronted constantly by those who sought to dissuade them from their Biblical views. To Zwingli who rebuked them for being on this issue"excessively Christian" when they should be shrewd enough to make compromises, the Anabaptists replied caustically: "diabolical prudence." To those members of the state church who insisted that the Christian could engage in war, the Anabaptists commented: "They mix together and patch the one to the other, namely, the sword of the world, of Moses, and of Christ."

Balthasar Hubmaier is the only Anabaptist leader of Switzerland-South Germany who rejected nonresistance. In his treatise, On the Sword, he presented his minority report. First, he charged, the brethren erred in a too rigid liberalism. Second, they failed to compare Scripture with Scripture. Here Hubmaier summoned the Old Testament to redress the "excessive nonresistance" of the New Testament. This was typical of all critics of the nonresistance of the Anabaptists--they cited passages from the Old Testament to match the teachings of Jesus in the New Covenant. Third, Hubmaier could not accept the fundamental principle of the majority of the brethren that the Christian must separate himself sharply from the world. To those who said that "a Christian may not bear the sword, since the Kingdom of Christ is not of this world," Hubmaier replied: "We are in the kingdom of the world, which is kingdom of sin, death, and hell. . . . The Christian, therefore, must accept his responsibilities in the world, including military service, duty as a magistrate, and swearing of the civil oath." Shades of Reinhold Niebuhr speaking in the sixteenth century! Fourth, Hubmaier insisted that as the soldier or the magistrate kills in line of duty, it is the office which kills, not the individual occupying that office. "Christ sanctions the sword," he taught, for the suppression of "self-constitued authority and wickedness." No one, however, is permitted to employ the sword "except that he be regularly elected and appointed for that purpose." "The magistrate may kill the evildoer, and in doing this he is guiltless according to the ordinance of God, and himself cannot be judged." He added that anyone asked

or commissioned to bear arms in behalf of the magistrate was "guiltless in helping him." To the majority of the Anabaptists this was simply sophistry or as they described it: "hiding the divine Word and mixing it with human wisdom." Their reply to Hubmaier? They did not debate. They did not argue. They patiently repeated again the commands of Christ as recorded in Scripture.

What more fitting conclusion is there to this presentation than the words of a humble prisoner in Zurich who in one simple sentence expressed the Anabaptist attitude toward war: "He who is at home with God will not employ the sword."

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE APPROACH TO THE BELIEVERS CHURCH

P. J. Dyck

According to E.T. Cark there are about 75,000,000 Protestants in America.[1] Generally speaking this group constitutes the so-called Protestant Church, but according to Mennonite tradition this is by no means synonymous with the "Believers Church". Historically Mennonites have lived in conflict with the world as well as with the large body of Protestants which tends to make a distinction between things "sacred" and things "secular". Mennonites have insisted that all of life must come under the lordship of Jesus Christ, in whom the members are united into a voluntary brotherhood of love. Speaking of the early Mennonites Dr. Correll says: "Mennonites have nothing to do with the Catholic or Protestant churches now in formation. They aim at a new religious community ... all that is or shall be, must be judged alone by the Biblical world view."[2] That which distinguishes the "Believers Church" from the common stream of Protestantism is largely the same as that which causes conflict and tension between them. Such factors as believer's baptism, non-resistance, non-conformity, non-swearing, separation of church and state, the priesthood of all believers and the non-participation in secret societies have in the past reminded Mennonites that they are a sect, a Brotherhood, a "Koinonia", a gathered or believers Church, but never merely a "Church".

The General Conference does not have a clear concept of the Church. It is quite possible that today we are able to be more articulate about the differences between "Church" and "Brotherhood", "Church" and "Sect", but we do not know to which of these we belong and, which is worse, we are not quite sure to which we would like to belong. Because of the lack of a clear concept of "our Church" it becomes well nigh impossible to speak of an approach to the Believers Church. There is no agreement on one approach any more than there is agreement on what constitutes a Believers Church. Generally speaking, however, we may say that the General Conference has two quite distinct and noticeably different approaches; we might call the one the Conference approach and the other the local-church approach, or the idealistic and the practical, the official and the actual. The former is concerned about maintaining the traditional Mennonite heritage and is reflected in lofty Conference resolutions which are, however, not binding upon the congregations. It is seen in official statements such as the current Peace Statement of our Conference. This so-called Anabaptist approach is not only rooted in the distant past but is as foreign and strange to many General Conference people as is the period in history which gave rise to it. On the local and practical level of many General Conference congregations the approach is quite different and does not markedly differ from that of the common stream of Protestantism. Speaking out of the Anabaptist side of our mouth we say that "We believe that war is altogether contrary to the teaching and spirit of Christ and the Gospel",[3] but from the other side of our mouth we give the oath of allegiance to military service. To wit: the official peace statement of our Conference is still in force, having been officially accepted by majority vote at Souderton, Pa. in 1941; nevertheless 73% of our drafted young men in World War II entered the armed services. Similarly it could be shown in the areas of church discipline, the simple life, and the receiving of new members into the church that we have two distinct approaches to the Believers Church, the official and the actual, the traditional Anabaptist approach along with that which is

Prevalent in current American Protestantism. This tends to give the impression that we are both sect and church at the same time, a matter to which we will return later. For the present it may be helpful in clarifying the issue if we remind ourselves of a few distinguishing characteristics between the church-type and the brotherhood or sect-type of churches.[4] In as much as this typology, which could be greatly extended if time permitted, helps us to understand the basic difference between the two, it will also help to spell out the General Conference approach to the Believers Church.

1. a) Brotherhood type: Membership based on a personal acceptance of Christ and conscious decision.

   c) Church type: Membership by birth into the religious-cultural community.

2. a) A voluntary fellowship of believers.

   b) The church striving to be coextensive with society.

3. a) Adherence to a radical ethic of love.

   b) Relaxation of moral demands; acceptance of general cultural standards as a practical definition of the moral obligation.

4. a) Exclusion from the fellowship of those who lapse from the standards.

   b) A relaxed discipline because the church embraces all who are socially compatible within it.

5. a) Emphasis on lay participation of the entire brotherhood.

   b) Passivity of church membership, membership expressed only through church attendance and obedience to church tradition.

6. a) An aggressive, evangelistic, missionary church.

   b) Emphasis on religious education and indoctrination of its own members.

7. a) Development of freer and simpler forms of church life.

   b) Pursuance of routinized patterns of worship and church order.

8. a) A heightened eschatological sense - living under the Cross.

   b) A relaxation of eschatological interest and a preoccupation with the preservation of the church and its members in this world.

9. a) A remnant called out of the world to live in nonconformity to the secular order.

   b) The church an essential part of the world and acquiescent to all the powers that constitute the world.

10. a) The theology of a suffering church.

b) The psychology of accommodation and success.

Such a contrasting of characteristics makes it evident that the sect is a "conflict group" sociologically speaking and not an "accommodation group". Can we say that the General Conference is still in practice a sect, a brotherhood-type of church? Many of us would like to say it. Dr. Pannabecker concludes, however, that "The General Conference is best interpreted as an attempt to adapt the Mennonite way of life to the American environment."[5]

I. Our Approach To The Believers Church As It Appears From Our Position In The Cycle Of The Sect.

As Mennonites we had our early beginnings in the brotherhood and sect-type of church. But sects tend to go in cycles, cycles of varying length of time but following with some predictability well-known patterns.[6] At first there is the existing sub-christian community which embraces all people. In this community a spiritual crisis arises, conflicts result and a schism takes place. A minority group isolates itself from the main body. For an indefinite period isolation is maintained by this new sect, this spiritually-minded brotherhood. It develops certain definite group characteristics during this period. Finally however, the apparently inevitable decline sets in. Isolation is minimized, peculiar doctrines hold only peripheral interest and once more the assimilation with the larger community, the world, is sought.

We would like to think of ourselves as a brotherhood-type of church, a believers church such as we indeed once were, but must perhaps begin to regard ourselves, as Dr. Pannabecker and others suggest, more as a group that is concerned with accommodation to society and adapting itself to the American environment. In brief, viewed in the light of the history of sects we have nearly completed the cycle, we have reached the place where we seek confortable adjustment to society and the rest of Protestantism.

II. Our Approach As It Appears From Our Economic Position

The practice of Christian stewardship is a marked characteristic of the Believers Church. Money and all possessions belong to the Lord, they are entrusted to us as stewards for a time. In the Believers Church the practice of tithing and offering as well as mutual aid are marked characteristics. But God's people are not exempt from temptation in terms of money, the love of which is the root of all evil. Clark says: "The virtues of frugality and industry bear fruit in prosperity, and when prosperity comes the reason for the sectarian revolt disappears and the manner of life against which the fathers rebelled is embraced by their children. Thus the spiritual need and economic forces which in one generation drew the sect out of the church turn about to transform the sect into a church."[7]

Said John Wesley: "I do not see how it is possible in the nature of things for any revival of religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches."[8] It is common knowledge that the material prosperity of the members of our Conference is great. Much as we would like to say that this has not adversely affected our spiritual life and has not altered our approach to the believers church, we cannot do this. Materialism has made deep inroads into our Conference. Many people all around us regard life an end in itself, to be enjoyed by the pleasures of sensual gratification. We have not successfully resisted this mood. It has crept upon us unawares and choked interest in spiritual values; it has destroyed respect for human life and personality; it has broken the reality of fellowship with God, the giver of every good and perfect gift.

Karl Marx believed that the oppressed classes of society should unite in order to force the rulers of industry to accept the terms of the laboring class. Some Mennonites have compromised the principle of nonresistance in joining labor unions. Says John R. Mumaw: "It appears also that they have convinced themselves that a 'job' is more important than a doctrine .. Many of our people are being influenced in their economic practices by a strong urge to accumulate wealth. They are living for the dollar. Major decisions are influenced strongly by the question, 'Does it pay'?[9] One ought not to be shocked too much to find that this question, "Does it pay?" is asked also in relation to the approach to the believers church. If a certain approach does not "pay" in terms of success as the world understands it, why continue such an approach. The General Conference is not free from this materialistic philosophy which measures "success" in terms of size, up-to-dateness and American know-how.

III. Our Approach As It Appears From Our Educational Position

The founders of our faith were for the most part educated men. Many of the early Anabaptist leaders had received university training. Bitter persecution and the subsequent period of toleration resulted in a general shift of emphasis -- Mennonites became "die Stillen im Lande" and frowned upon higher education.

Although this spirit of withdrawal was transplanted to America, it is quite evident that it has not been maintained. One might speak of a real thirst for knowledge among Mennonite youth of the last several decades. A great many General Conference young people have gone to institutions of higher learning, but by no means all have succeeded in integrating the teachings of Darwinism, the pragmatic philosophies of John Dewey and William James into their Christian faith. Don Smucker points out that many Mennonite teachers in the public schools discard fundamental convictions, which enables them to participate more freely in public activities and community organizations.[10]

The Christian approach is that all of life, including education and learning, comes under the lordship of Christ. But for some reason not quite clear yet, it has been difficult for the Mennonite Church to hold "Intellectuals" and professionals. Says Mumaw: "Although they may have

engaged in enterprises that contributed to social welfare, there has been a distinct loss of talent to the church, and a greater loss of spiritual convictions to the trained persons. The professions have taken some of the best potential leadership away from the Mennonite community. Many such useful Mennonite people have been submerged in the secularism of a consuming world."[11]

The same adverse forces that are at work in higher education are influencing our young people in the public schools. In them the curriculums are highly secularized and geared to indoctrinate youth with ideals and standards alien to the New Testament and the faith of those who founded a believers church. The same must be said about the forces of public education such as radio, movie, T.V. and the printed page. All of these are ruthlessly striking at the very root of our spiritual life, the home. One by one these secular forces have succeeded in wresting from our homes the responsibility of shaping and moulding the character of our young people I believe that a survey would reveal that for a great many General Conference people there is a more or less clear distinction between things sacred and things secular. This lapse from the New Testament position is the fruit of materialism and has come about largely through the secularizing forces of the total impact of American education. H.S. Bender says: "What we cannot make sacred we have no business doing at all."[12]

IV. Our Approach As It Appears From Our Position of Religious Tolerance

The brotherhood and sect-type of church does not tolerate flirtation with the secular world nor does it compromise its religious convictions with the tenets of other faiths. What is the General Conference position in this regard? S.F. Pannabecker says:

> "The most significant change due to the American environment is the weakening of the sense of separation from society resulting from the American religious tolerance and the consequent possibility of acceptance by society. Original Mennonite characteristics which were based on an enforced distinction from society have thus suffered. This explains more than any other factor the tendency to disintegration of the Mennonite system seen in the loss of traditional church discipline and thoroughgoing non-resistance."[13]

The enervating influence of religious tolerance is unmistakably at work in the General Conference. Much Mennonite thinking has been influenced away from the true New Testament and Anabaptist position by the radio ministry. A Mennonite woman and member of the church I was then serving once sent me five dollars along with her Christmas card saying: "Since at this time of the year I remember all my radio ministers in this way I thought I would include you too." The local pastor of our General Conference churches is competing in a very real way with a host of unseen "ministers" for the loyalty of his own church members. The pattern of Mennonite life has been greatly modified as a result of religious toleration. It finds expression not merely in an "open mind" but like the Athenians is characterized by a desire "to hear some new thing".[14] It is characterized by tolerance of sin within the church, by participation in political and military affairs, by a lack of church discipline, by increasing numbers of inter-marriages with

non-Mennonites, by forsaking of the simple life, by modification of our church services to suit the usual Protestant forms and by closing an eye to questionable and doubtful practices within the brotherhood.

E. Stanly Jones says: "Christianity is at the parting of the ways. It is now at the point of decision where it must decide in a larger way to be definitely Christian or vaguely religious. The whole pressure is toward syncretism. In East and West the demand is that we draw a line through the word "Christian" and put in "Religious".[15]

Our approach to the believers Church is in many respects identical with that of general Protestantism. This is most clearly seen in the area of religious toleration. Two contrasting approaches within our Conference in South America may serve to illustrate this point. When the colony Neuland was set up, refugee H.R. with the help of a few born-again Christians, proceeded to build not only a new colony but with God's help also a new spiritual life in the colony. Correll's statement that Mennonites "aim at a new religious community" became literally true. It is a thrilling and heart-warming story, a story of building a Believers Church within the existing Mennonite "church" and larger totally Mennonite community.[16] Inspired by this example of genuine New Testament Christianity and the creation of a believers church in the Anabaptist tradition a similar attempt is now being made in another country. But some General Conference leaders are taking a very critical attitude toward such action. They regard the setting up of a "clean church" as a noble effort but suggest that this is too radical. They wonder whether some brother could not undertake this difficult work who would be more disposed to meet half-way the many Mennonites who for the most part belonged originally to the General Conference. That phrase, "more disposed to meet half-way", is characteristic of our approach to the believers church as viewed in the light of our current enervating religious tolerance.

V. Summary and Conclusion

The General Conference is suffering because of lack of a clear concept of the Church. We have two distinct approaches to the Believers Church, the official Conference Approach and the practical local church approach. If we continue much longer in this dual state the lofty ideals will tend to become merely opinions. Sects tend to go in cycles -- the General Conference is in the last phase of this cycle, being much concerned about accommodation to society. Viewed from the economic position the General Conference approach to the Believers Church is more typically American than Apostolic or Anabaptist. Secular and pagan educational forces have made deep inroads into the spiritual life of our Conference. Religious tolerance has had an enervating effect on us and has given us a typically Protestant approach rather than a New Testament believers approach to all matters of Christian life and faith.

But there is also a hopeful and positive side to this somewhat discouraging picture. The apostles and our forfathers are known to have been men of great missionary zeal. This was dormant in our Conference for some time, but today we have over 100 missionaries in the field and support a mission budget of $430,612. There is much interest in Voluntary Service and Relief. There is a renewed emphasis on evangelism and on the practice

of love in non-resistance. I see no reason why the predicted sect-cycle must complete its course. We can prevent a complete return and accommodation to society, we do not need to throw in our lot with watered-down Protestantism. But we must place greater emphasis on personal conversion and evangelism. We can check the subtle and tempting onslaughts of materialism by returning to the practice of Christian stewardship. We can repair the damage done by secular education by setting up more of our own parochial schools, giving a more distinctive Christian emphasis in our Colleges and making our homes more Christ-centered. And we can avoid the pitfalls set for us by current American religious tolerance by an honest attempt to return to the message and spirit of the New Testament and a simple faith and childlike obedience to Jesus Christ. Many of the negative factors mentioned in this brief survey can be turned to positive advantage, especially in view of the fact that they are seen in clearer focus today than ever before.

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1. Clark, E.T., The Small Sects in America, (New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949), p.13.

2. Quoted by Correll, Ernst H., Das Schweizerische Taeufer-Mennonitentum, (Tuebringen, 1925), p.7.

3. A Statement of the Position of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America on Peace, War, Military Service, and Patriotism as approved by the General Conference" (Souderton, Pennsylvania, August 17-22, 1941).

4. Chosen from a list compiled by Robert Kreider, based on descriptions of such men as Troeltsch, Wach, Bainton, Pope, Meyer, Walten and R. Niebuhr and quoted in "The Anabaptist Conception of the Church in the Russian Mennonite Environment", Mennonite Quarterly Review, (Goshen, Ind., Mennonite Historical Library, January 1951, pp. 19,20.

5. Pannabecker, S.F., The Development of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America in the American Environment, Doctors Thesis, 1944, p. II.

6. This is the main theme of Broadbent's The Pilgrim Church, and is also described briefly by E.G. Kaufman in The Development of the Missionary and Philanthropic Interest Among the Mennonites of North America. (Berne, Ind., Mennonite Book Concern, 1931), p. 33.

7. Clark, op. cit., p. 17

8. Quoted by Clark, Ibid., p. 18

9. Mumaw, John R., "Current Forces Adversely Affecting the Life of the Mennonite Community", Mennonite Quarterly Review, April 1945, pp. 103-105.

10. Smucker, Don E., "The Influence of Public Schools on Mennonite Ideals and Its Implications for the Future", Proceedings of Second Annual Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems, p. 51.

11. Mumaw, op. cit., p. 106

12. Bender, H.S., "The Mennonite Conception of the Church and its Relation to Community Building", Mennonite Quarterly Review, April 1945, p. 92.

13. Pannabecker, op. cit. p. II.

14. Acts 17:21

15. Jones, E. Stanly, The Christ of Every Road, (New York, The Abingdon Press, 1930), p. 244.

16. For an account of this by H.R. himself see "Zum Bau Einer Neuen Gemeinde", in DER MENNONIT, Feb. 1951, p. 23, published by the Mennonite Central Committee , Akron, Pa., (a translation of which is attached hereto.)

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Gen. Conf. Peace Study Conference
Eden - April 10, 11, 1953

THE DISCIPLE AS A CITIZEN

Russell Mast

When the village of Germantown, Pennsylvania was first incorporated in 1691, it was as a closed corporation, the members being granted the exclusive right of franchise, of legislation and of admitting new members. At first, the village was composed almost entirely of Mennonites and Quakers; and Mennonites, as well as Quakers, participated freely in the affairs of the community, even to the extent of holding office. All went well as long as the village problems had to do mainly with such matters as stray pigs and line fences. But as outsiders began to pour into the community and it seemed to become necessary to have jails, stocks and whipping posts, the Mennonites soon lost interest in holding office. By 1707 the village actually lost its charter for the reason that no one could be found who was willing to hold office. As C. Henry Smith remarks, "....we have here the unparalleled instance of a corporation losing its charter because no one could be found who was willing to hold the offices." (The Story of the Mennonites, p. 535)

This is more than a story from an early page of the history of the American Mennonites. Truly it symbolizes the ultimate dilemma posed by our problem: The Disciple as a Citizen. To what extent can a Christian, who takes the ethical teachings of Jesus seriously, participate in and be responsible for the state? Where does his respective allegiance to state or to church begin or end? Is he faced with the dilemma either of compromise with or withdrawal from the state of which he is a citizen? The state - even our own democracy - under the pressure of a war psychosis, is reaching into every phase of life with its claim of sovereignty. The questions emerging from the relation of a Christian to the state have, therefore, a new urgency in our time. Nevertheless, the problems admit of no easy solutions. Despite the pressures of these days, we must guard against hasty answers. For we are dealing with an exceedingly complex problem.

I. THE COMPLEXITY OF THE PROBLEM

1. For one thing, we have no precise blueprint from the scriptures. At first this may appear to be a limitation, but as we hope to show presently, it is rather a source of strength. But in order to make the proper beginning with the problem, we should recognize what the scriptures propose to do. We should not expect to find in the scriptures a set of specific rules to be followed in copy book fashion. We have Romans 13, as well as I Peter 2, in addition to the words of Jesus, "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." (Matt. 22:21) Important as these passages are as guides to the answer we are seeking, they do not answer all our questions. There are still problems relating to the Christian and the state in our modern day which these passages do not answer. Moreover, Christian interpreters have read much into these passages which these passages never meant to say, for the same passages have been used to champion opposite points of view. This brings us to the second fact relating to the complexity of our problems.

2. There have been many interpretations within the Christian tradition. H. Richard Niebuhr in his book, Christ and Culture, has analyzed

the typical answers that have been made to this problem into five broad categories: 1. Christ against Culture; 2. Christ with Culture; 3. Christ above Culture; 4. Christ and Culture in tension; 5. Christ transforming Culture. What impresses one in reading this analysis is that those in each group claim some foundation in New Testament teachings, but make very different answers to the problem of Christ and Culture. The problem with which we are dealing, the relation of a Christian to the State, is an aspect of the larger problem of the relation of Christ to Culture. Indeed, one might substitute the words Christian for Christ and State for Culture in Niebuhr's analysis, and have a fairly accurate picture of the many answers that have been made within the Christian tradtion to our problem.

3. A third fact contributing to the complexity of our problem: there is as yet no complete statement of our Anabaptist position. It should not be forgotten that systematic studies in Anabaptist theology are still very new. In recent years, many excellent studies have appeared in the form of books and articles, even from non-Mennonite authors. Yet much more needs to be done by a great number of scholars, that we may properly understand the background out of which we have come and derive guidance for the future. What is the answer of the Anabaptists to the relation of the Christian and the state? Currently it has been characterized as a "strategy of withdrawal" by John C. Bennett. Yet appearing in the Winona Lake Report is this statement by Prof. Robert Kreider, "I am not willing to accept the Bennett views as a valid critique of Anabaptism in its creative age in the early sixteenth century. I am prepared to grant the Bennett judgment on Mennonitism in the not-too-distant past." (p. 59) This is an exeedingly important and interesting observation and we hope that Kreider or someone with the proper linguistic and scholastic equipment will present a study of the problem.

II. LIGHT FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Yet despite these facts contributing to the complexity of our problem, we are not left completely in the dark. A moment ago we stated that we do not have a precise blueprint to follow in copy book fashion in our relation as Christians to the state. What we do have from the scriptures is not a blueprint but light, which is far better. A blueprint would soon be dated. But light always illuminates the specific problem of each new age.

Instead of providing for a precise blueprint which would need constant revision with each new age, Jesus did something far better. He provided for the Holy Spirit who would guide, illuminate and empower as man would seek in each new age to do the will of God. Indeed, he thought of his own ministry as but the beginning of greater things yet to come. His followers were to carry on and push the gospel into all the world and into all phases of life. This is how we are to understand his great promise in the fourteenth chapter of John at verse twelve: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father". Where then, we do not have the precise word of scripture on a problem, we can start with what is given to us, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, go on. Christianity is always a creative spirit, sensitive to the Living Word of God.

We are dealing, then, with an exceedingly complex problem. But there is light along the way, and as we seek to answer the questions relating to our relation to the state, we will be helped by asserting three principles.

III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES (THREE CONSIDERATIONS)

1. The first principle guiding the life of a disciple as a citizen is the Lordship of Christ over the whole of life. Implicit in the idea of the Lordship of Christ is the idea of discipleship. According to many interpreters, this is the key to the understanding to Anabaptist theology. (See Bender, "The Anabaptist Vision" and "Anabaptist Theology of Discipleship") The early leaders of the movement insisted that the experience of salvation by grace through faith, necessary as it was, was only the beginning of the Christian experience. This experience, if it is vital, must always issue in "evidenced" behavior. From faith men must move to following, from decision to discipleship, from the new birth to the new life. This new life must then be characterized by complete obedience to Christ and his teachings. With respect to our immediate problem, it would mean quite clearly that if there would be a conflict between obedience to the state and obedience to Christ, they would take their stand with Christ, and suffer the consequences.

In making this emphasis, they were in fact making a correct interpretation of the New Testament scriptures. Whatever we may need to render to Caesar as his just due, it is never unqualified allegiance. Whatever "being subject unto the higher powers" may mean, it could never mean that the state was mortal God, after the manner of Thomas Hobbes. For there was always the overruling principle, "We ought to obey God rather than man." (Acts 5:29) Eventually Paul demonstrated that very principle by becoming a prisoner of the state and a martyr "for conscience" sake".

The Lordship of Christ is by its very nature inclusive, extending over the whole of life. If he demands obedience in one sphere of life, he demands it in every sphere of life. Mennonite interpreters have considered this, too, as being a part of the "Anabaptist Vision". From H.S. Bender's "Theology of Discipleship" we read, "In essence the discipleship which the Anabaptists proclaimed was simply the bringing of the whole of life under the Lordship of Christ, and the transformation of this life, both personal and social, after His image." (MQR, Ja 1950) It appears that Mennonite writers have not been too eager to follow through these principles stated thus in general terms. If the Lordship of Christ is over the whole of life, then he is relevant to all of life. If he is relevant to all of life, then he is relevant to the affairs of the state. He has a claim on man's citizenship and statesmanship. This is not to deny the principle of separation of church and state, but rather to point out that it does not mean the separation of religion from the nation. We cannot separate the church from the state to the extent that we make Christ irrelevant to the state.

What happens to our principle of the Lordship of Christ over the whole of life when we say what a Mennonite writer says concerning the nonresistant Christian, "While he believes it is altogether wrong to participate in military service, he does not dispute the state's right to declare war."? Does Christ have no claim on statesmanship? If it is wrong for a Christian to take life, is it not wrong for the state to do so? I would certainly dispute the state's right to disobey the law of God.

2. A second principle guiding the life of a disciple as a citizen is the power of the Holy Spirit working through regenerated lives in history. We are living in a day when any kind of optimism about human effort is a position

exceedingly difficult to hold. Sunny optimism has been blacked out by the montrous cloud overhanging these dark days. We are the most disillusioned generation in human history. And for very good reason. This despair and disillusionment has found theological expression in the writings particularly of Reinhold Neibuhr. He came to puncture the hollow pretensions of man, reminding him to expect no simple triumph of good over evil in human history; that sin was deeply rooted in the human situation and would remain with him until the end of history. All of this we believe to be true. But if it is the whole truth, then surely among Mennonites it will tend to foster the strategy of withdrawal with respect to the state. It will tend to limit the Lordship of Christ to a small sphere of life and make him irrelevant to the affairs of state.

Yet one cannot escape the fact that Christianity is a religion of hope: and not only a hope beyond history, a hope within history. Granting the darkest possible outlook for the efforts of unregenerated man, can we expect nothing from the power of the Holy Spirit working through regenerated man? I find Culbert Rutenber much more satisfactory on this point when he writes, "The biblical view of man and history is neither optimistic nor pessimistic. It is realistic. The Christian knows too much of the reality of sin to be optimistic. At the same time, he is too aware of the grace of Jesus Christ to be cynical. He wraps a relative pessimism in an ultimate optimism. But that ultimate optimism is centered in God and not in man, not even in redeemed man." (_The Dagger and the Cross_. p. 117)

Now we are not left entirely to guesswork or surmises as to what the Holy Spirit, working through regenerated individuals, can do in history. We have history itself as a living witness. Let us take but one example: the Wesley revival in England. The life of England, both private and corporate, before the coming of this great outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the great awakening, was rotten to the core. Bishop Berkeley wrote in 1738, "Morality and religion have collapsed to a degree that has never been known in a Christian country. It is to be feared that the age of monsters is not far off." Wm. E. Blackstone said, concerning the sermons of the day, that he did not hear a single discourse which had any more Christianity in it than the writings of Cicero. Then came the great awakening. J. Wesley Bready declares in his study, _England, Before and After Wesley_, "England after Wesley became a vastly different country from England before Wesley." This movement marked the watershed of English social history. The great social reformers, statesmen, humanitarians who saved England from rottenness and decay were either converts of this movement or very directly influenced by it. He traces the direct influence of this movement into such problems as the liquor traffic, the abolition of the slave trade, the humanizing of the prison system, the improvement of labor relations, not to mention the work among the destitute. Leckey, the classic secular historian of the 18th century, said, "Wesley saved England from the horrors of the French Revolution."

I am trying to suggest by all of this that the power of the Holy Spirit working through regenerated lives can achieve significant results in history. I am saying that if we attempt great things for God, we can by His own promise, expect great things from Him. The things which we should attempt for God in this dark period of human history certainly include the problems of state and nation. We need to grapple with the race question, we need to solve the problem of poverty and want among the vast populations of the world,

we need to raise the level of honesty and integrity in government, and so it goes through the whole gamut of life. We need to produce a new type of manhood in public life, we need to introduce a fresh approach to the problems of statesmanship. In all of this, we are not talking about unaided human effort; we are talking about the power of the Holy Spirit working through the lives of regenerated individuals. I am saying, therefore, that the Lordship of Christ over the whole of life means that he is relevant to all of life, and that by the Holy Spirit working through regenerated individuals, God can do incredible things in history as He has done many times before.

3. A third principle guiding the life of a disciple as a citizen is God's ultimate fulfillment of history. The New Testament, however, teaches us plainly enough that, while significant results can by the Holy Spirit be achieved in history, yet history itself is temporal and temporary. It reminds us of the unfinished nature of life's earthly pilgrimage. We are taught to look to God for the fulfillment of history, when by the act of God, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. 11:15) There is hope within history, but our ultimate hope is beyond history.

Those in times past who have had great concerns toward world improvement and influencing the affairs of state and human betterment, have given scant consideration to the second coming of Christ and the ultimate fulfillment of history by an act of God. They have entertained false hopes about human possibilities in history. On the other hand, those who have had great interest in the second of coming of Christ have had little concern for world improvement and human betterment. They have had nothing but scorn for those who have sought to prevent war and work for peace. They have opposed efforts to reduce national sovereignty in favor of world government. Let me say at once that this either-or dilemma which has been set up is a false dilemma. I believe profoundly that the Kingdom of God will come as an act of God, but I believe just as firmly that in the meanwhile, it is my duty to realize it as much as I can in every phase of life. It is my duty in the meanwhile to seek for "the transformation of this life, both personal and social, after his image". Both are false deductions from scripture: on the one hand to say that the world will get better and better or on the other hand that the world will get worse and worse. Isolated passages might be adduced to support either contention, but viewed from the whole of scripture and the whole of history, it is more true to say that to the very end we will see the forces of light and the forces of darkness arrayed against each other. Problems solved in one area of life will break out in other forms in other areas. But my task is clear: to bring the whole of life under the Lordship of Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit working within me, until the fulfillment of history.

The Christian hope, properly viewed, does not discourage human effort, but encourages it. I do not work for world improvement and human betterment in spite of the fulfillment of history, but precisely because of it. One verse from the writings of Paul has become luminous to me in Moffatt's translation: "... of this I am confident, that he who has begun the good work in you will go on completing it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Ph. 1:6) What the Holy Spirit begins in you in history, God promises His own hand to the fulfillment. While I may see no easy triumph of good in history, though in every age some triumph of good there will be, yet the ultimate triumph is in the hands of God. Improvement is my responsibility. Fulfillment is the promise of God.

CONCLUSIONS

All of this, while seeming to evade the specific problem assigned assigned to us, points nevertheless to this one conclusion: that the strategy of withdrawal with respect to the state, while seeming to have the sanction of parts of the New Testament and the Mennonite tradition, is in the present context of human history not an adequate solution to the problem. This creative spirit resident in Christianity and the Anabaptist vision must push us on to new and fresh approaches, as regenerated men keep themselves open to the Holy Spirit of God. Satisfied only to establish these guiding principles for our thinking, this paper proposes no ready-made solutions. Several things might be said provisionally.

1. We must continue our program of missions, education, and service. These exert a positive, even though indirect, influence on the state.

2. Let us, as disciples, become reconcilers within the state. An unknown Christian of the second century wrote, "In a word, what the soul is in a body, this the Christians are in the world. The soul is spread through all the members of the body, and Christians through the divers cities of the world. The soul is enclosed in the body, and yet itself holdeth the body together; so Christians are kept in the world as in a prison-house, and yet they themselves hold the world together. So great is the office for which God hath appointed them, and which it is not lawful for them to decline."

3. Let us, as disciples, become the conscience of the state. Whatever may be the techniques employed to implement this exceedingly important role, we cannot afford to be indifferent to what the state does; even less can we afford to go along with the state uncritically. We aim at nothing short of Christ transforming Culture.

We know that in this task we will never fully succeed within victory. Woodrow Wilson once said, "I would rather fail in a cause that will ultimately succeed than succeed in a cause that will ultimately fail." We have this confidence that this ultimate success is sure, and that it is beyond history.

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THE DISCIPLE AS A CITIZEN

Dave Janzen

DEFINITION

It will not be necessary to give a complete description of the words "Disciple" and "Citizen", but we should try to give a sufficient description of them.

We might start off by giving a genetic definition of the word "Disciple". How does one become a disciple of Jesus Christ? "Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols" (Ex. 14:6). "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36). In order to become a disciple one has to be convicted of his sinfulness, feel sorry for acts and thoughts of wickedness, and be informed of the way of salvation. The objective means toward obtaining salvation is, "... the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God..." (Heb. 9:14). It purges our conscience from dead works so that we can serve the living God. The subjective requirement is faith.

We could also give a pragmatic definition of "disciple," "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you," (John 15:14). If the fruit of the Spirit is evident in a persons life, then he is a disciple (Gal. 5:22, 23).

Since psychological motives justify a circular definition we might also say that a disciple is a Christian (Acts 11:26).

A disciple is a person related to God in such a way that he loves God with all his heart and with all his soul, and with all his mind; and is related to his neighbor in such a way that he loves his neighbor as he loves himself.

We sometimes speak of a Christian being a citizen of heaven; that he owes allegiance to God (Phil. 3:20). This loyalty to God is exclusive in the sense that one cannot have conflicting loyalties. And if anyone should suggest that my loyalty to God and my loyalty to the state conflict, then I would answer that inasmuch as this conflict is said to pertain, my loyalty to the state does not exist. (I make the above claim with reference to "loyalty" because it holds true for duty, and loyalty is a sentiment accompanying duty.) Therefore, Jesus tells us that we cannot serve two masters (Matth. 6:24).

However, we use the word "citizen" here with reference to the allegiance which the disciple owes to the state. That is, the disciple, whether he likes it or not, is also a member of a state and as such he is a citizen of that particular state. (He could possibly renounce his citizenship if he wished and probably a few might say that a "good Mennonite" "should come out from among them.") Since human beings are ordinarily born within the boundaries of a state, of parents who are citizens of that state, the state claims them as citizens. Thus Paul was a Roman citizen possibly due to the fact that he was born in a free city.

"For practical purposes," says Aristotle, "it is sufficient to define a citizen as the son or the grandson of a citizen." He also says, that whoever has the right to take part in the judicial and executive part of the government in any state, him we call a citizen of that place.

Since our definition of citizen involves the word "state", we will have to define it also. Aristotle says:

> A state is a cociety of people joining together with their families, and their children, to live well, for the sake of a perfect and independent life. The end for which the state is established is that the inhabitants may live happily. Therefore those who most promote this deserve the greater power. (Politics III, 9).

Aristotle's definition could be classed as following the idealistic theory of the state. He also claims that in a well-governed state a superiority in virtue cannot justly be subjected to control, neither does it seem right to turn such a person out, so that all one can do is to choose such a person for a king and be perfectly submissive to him.

This might sound like a tempting analysis to us as one group of Mennonites. Those who accept the idealistic interpretation of the state tend to feel that the spiritual life should not and cannot emancipate itself from the state. We should, however, be aware that when a state is defined in terms of the highest Good, then we cannot really be citizens of such a state if we want to remain truly devoted to God, whom we identify as the highest Good.

Of course, we might argue with Thomas Aquinas that, "...the summum bonum for man is objectively God, subjectively the happiness to be derived from loving vision of His perfections; although there is a lower kind of happiness to be realized here below in a normal human existence of virtue and friendship, with mind and body sound and whole and properly trained for the needs of earthly life." (Sidgwick, History of Ethics p. 141)

Then we might wish to claim the state as the second highest Good. That is what the Church taught in the Medieval period. Each one of us belongs to two states, the temporal state representing earthly good and the heavenly state representing eternal life.

The other definition of the state must make it highly repulsive to us. Santayana, in Dominations and Powers, says, "All government is therefore potential war; and if this threat and ability to use force disappear, government ceases .... and to take people prisoners, to kill or despoil them are acts of war. Every government is essentially an army carrying on a perpetual campaign in its own territory; it is always up in arms against actual or possible faction - - called illegality or crime." If we accept this analysis of the function of government, then we as non-resistant Mennonites must consistently separate ourselves from it whether it be, in what we ordinarily call, times of peace, or in times of war.

On the other hand, we also tend to examine some of the services which the government performs, such as: education, road-building, and relief and feel that we might cooperate with the government in these areas without a compromise being involved.

Brunner accepts the view of the paradoxical nature of the state when he says, in The Divine Imperative, "...without this daemonic violent power of compulsion we cannot imagine how any unity of a people could have come into existence, and without this power of compulsion the state cannot fulfill its divinely appointed purpose in and for society (p. 445). He speaks of the most brutal, anti-divine forces sharing in the growth of every state. He regards the state as the product of collective sin, but then he also claims it to be a manifestation of spiritual forces and purposes, the bearer of culture, and the guardian of justice and human values against arbitrary violence. Without it human society would dissolve into atoms.

It seems to me that we as Mennonites will have to accept this paradox as a fact without accepting Brunner's deductions. Or why have we been unable to establish a pure Christian community?

THE HISTORICAL APPROACH

According to Smith's, The Story of the Mennonites, the Anabaptists believed the wordly kingdom to be essentially evil, yet it was considered the duty of this government to protect the Christian. This, he says, appears as a naive and selfish political philosophy in our day, but was perfectly inevitable and logical in that day of intolerance and union of state and church. (p. 31).

In The Sewanee Review Vol. LVII, 1949, Drucker presenting Kierkegaard's views says, "... existence in society requires that society's objective need for survival determine the functions and the actions of the citizen. But existence in the spirit is possible only if there is no law and no rule except of the person, alone with himself and his God. Because man must exist in society, there can be no freedom except in matters that do not matter; but because man must exist in the spirit, there can be no social rule, no social constraint in matters that do matter".

In The Anabaptist View of the Church, Littell quotes the following statement from Neff: "Concerning the worldly magistrate, we recognize indeed that it was established and ordered to chasten the evil, but it is not given that a Christian can or may be it, for Christ commands one shall not resist evil. Item, we shall love our enemies." (p.88). However the Anabaptists appear to have had their difficulties with this paradox. They believed that a magistrate was duty bound to protect the good and punish the wicked, but when it was a question of supporting him, some said one should support the magistrate who obeyed the Bible. But if he obeys God's commandments he must be a disciple, unless he only happens to act in accordance with duty and not from duty.

The early Christian Church also believed ordinary human society to be surrendered to Satanic rule over which swift and sudden destruction was impending. Tertullian held that no Christian could properly hold the office of a secular magistrate in which he would have to doom to death, chains, or imprisonment. A Christian must not accuse anyone of a capital crime, since slaying by word is as bad as slaying by deed. Ambrose maintained that Christian longsuffering precludes the shedding of blood even in self-defence against murderous assault. (Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 120ff)

From the foregoing discussion we realize that we become involved in all kinds of problems. If we believe that it is wrong for us as Christians, to hold government office, it must be wrong for other Christians likewise, e.g. Baptists, Presbyterians, etc. Or would we excuse these by saying that they are not true disciples?

From Scripture - Jesus was no political revolutionary and he appears to have taken the private citizen's duties to the state for granted. The question of tribute shows us that any explicit teaching in the political sphere would have been dangerous and if possible would likely have been misunderstood. Even his disciples were ready to smite with the sword and revolt when Jesus was taken captive. But Jesus quietly submits to the power of darkness.

This submission in no way implies worship as it was called for in His temptation experience. (Does Matth. 4:9 imply that all the kingdoms of the world are administered by Satan?) It was only conditionally necessary, Scripture had to be fulfilled, (Matth. 26:53-54). But His teaching of humility and service was a difficult lesson and the disciples apparently did not fully understand it till after the resurrection. The sons of Zebedee wish to be the greatest in the kingdom. Jesus says they who aspire to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, but that in his kingdom the chiefest will be the servant of all (Mk.10). The disciples are still quarrelling about this question after the Supper in Luke 22:24. The rule of the state seems to be viewed here as an arbitrary and oppressive power.

We might also suggest that while Jesus doesn't give us explicit teaching concerning the disciple's relation to the state, we still have the implicit teaching in the Sermon on the Mount which would take care of all human relations. As an example, the early Church did not abolish slavery, but the sting was still taken out of this social evil and it became impossible for slavery to continue to exist.

We may conclude then that if it is possible to do humble Christian service as a civil servant, we may accept a government position.

Paul clearly is of the opinion that Christians ought to settle their differences without recourse to state courts. They ought to be able to judge better than unbelievers and be aware that the unrighteous will not enter into the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6). We are not only to be governed by what is lawful but ought also to consider what is expedient. We ought rather to suffer wrong than resort to litigation.

That appears to mean that we should not demand our rights whether we consider them as belonging to us legally or naturally. At least we ought not to demand them in such a way that we appeal to the power of the state. What if a non-Christian takes a case to court where we are involved, should we then exercise our right of defence? Or should a Christian never come into such a situation?

Rom. XIII. From Paul's statement in Romans we will have to conclude that there is some good in the state and that we ought to be subject to it. One might interpret this passage to mean that God has ordained the universal power but not the particular. But it seems to me that obedience to God's ordained universal power also implies obedience to the universal in the particular. So we still have to deal with particular states. Now there are those

who hold that particular states come into existence due to God's permissive will. Others make a distinction on the basis of the state which has the right to exist and which is the only one ordained by God and that other existing states are not so ordained. Both explanations do not appear altogether satisfactory. Another possible interpretation is that Paul limits his first statement later by saying that the ordained state is a terror to evil works. Then one would conclude that a state which is a terror to good works is not ordained of God.

Paul clearly teaches that we ought to be obedient to the state and that this obedience is to be an obedience as unto God (Eph. 5:5,6).

We still are free to determine which works are good and which are evil.

We might expect that each power will become powerless if it is not a minister of God for good and that under such conditions the universal ceases to exist in the particular (cf. Saul).

If we believe that the state doesn't have the right to exercise captial punishment, I suppose there would not be any great difficulty in explaining the sword as a symbol of police power.

Paul also instructs disciples to pray for the authorities (I Tim. 2:2).

On the basis of O.T. teaching it would appear to me that God uses the nations to punish evil whether in His children or in other nations. But in due course they themselves will be judged since they also are evil. Here we may also agree with Shakespeare in King Lear, that evil tends to destroy itself. The lesson which we should draw from this fact is that we do not allow ourselves to be used as a scourge for others nor become involved with evil in any other way.

While I am not optimistic enough to hold that whatever happens in time is good, however evil it is, which seems to be a philosophy accepted by a good many people in our day, I do think it is our duty to guard against error within our own group and that we can also influence society in general by exposing error and by the use of licit psychological and spiritual power. I don't think it would be wrong for us to use this type of power because it recognizes the personality of our neighbor, whereas the material power does not do so. However, I do think the latter power can also be legitimately applied in certain circumstances where you deal with children or the mentally insane.

THE MORAL APPROACH

From our point of view we could claim that the true Christian is a better citizen than the non-Christian. However, we can expect that the state and the non-Christian members of it will not agree with us.

Philosophers have searched for a foundation of morals and have not been altogether successful. But I do believe the Christian has such a foundation expressed in terms of "faith" and "love". Some theologians have held that the divine law is essentially arbitrary being an expression of the will and not of reason. Whatever the relation which truthfully obtains, I still think it cannot

involve a contradiction. However, the early Christians were not aware of this problem and for them faith meant clinging to moral and religious conviction. With reference to the antithesis of "faith" and "works", faith was thought to mean more than loyal acceptance of the divine law and reverent trust in the lawgiver. Here it implied the ever present consciousness of the radical imperfection of all merely human obedience to the law. In one view of "saving" faith it gives the believer strength to achieve, by God's grace, a goodness of which he is naturally incapable. On the other view faith gives him the assurance that, although he is a sinner, a just God still shows him favor on the basis of the perfect services and sufferings of Christ. (Sidgwick, op.cit., pp. 116-117).

For Kierkegaard the opposite of sin is not virtue but faith. It is the belief that in God the impossible becomes possible. In faith there is a true ethic and existence in society becomes meaningful as an existence in true charity.

Sidgwick tells us that the name "charity" was used in several European languages instead of "brotherly love". The cause of this was the emphasis on the free communication of wealth to the needy. But the medieval Church went even farther and claimed that mere ownership of wealth gave a Christian no moral right to its enjoyment. The moral right was determined by the real need although need was ordinarily determined on the basis of the class in society to which one belonged.

In my opinion we should also seek to get away from the capitalistic attitude to property and return to the Christian attitude which may be communistic without the use of force. It would appear that if we continue to hold on to private property we ought only to possess it but not own it, "...neither said any of them that ought of the things which they possessed was his own" (Acts 4:32).

If we love God we will have the right kind of self-love. Not one which indulges the various passions but one which is obedient to God. We truly love ourself then because all our activity is related to God and the gift of eternal life will be bestowed upon us. To love God will also mean loving our neighbor in the right manner. We will try to help him to love God. Since this love has a different goal than human love, the lot of the disciple will be one of persecution. Jesus loved in this fashion and he was persecuted, will not our lot be the same? In Luke 12:51 Jesus says that he has not come to bring peace on earth but rather division. Kierkegaard says the reward for love is being hated by the beloved. That is why the state will not appreciate having disciples as citizens. Yet the disciples might be the reason for sparing a state which is otherwise ripe for judgment.

In love we have the fulfillment of the law. To limit a Christian by a petty code of moral rules would lead to legalism. A truly virtuous person will do more than the law requires. The only reason for vesting authority in the laws is for restricting those who tend to do evil.

Within a particular state we have certain rights. Some people regard some rights, as the right to live, as naturally belonging to everyone. Others regard all our rights as having been won through the process of a long struggle. Hobbes believes that in a state of nature a man has a right to everything. He claims that too is a state of war.

When we have a right we are free to exercise it or to forbear as long as it does not involve duty. Thus in forming a state the individual man gives up certain rights for certain other benefits. A Christian need not have any scruples about giving up these rights to a state. But if a state should wish to take from us the right to worship the true God, we say that is a matter of duty and we cannot give that up without doing wrong. So we might say that the state has no right to deprive us of our freedom of worship. If the state seeks to force us to give it up than it is doing wrong.

With respect to punishing the wicked, we may, on the basis of Rom. 13 concede that the state has that right. However, we might conclude that certain rights belong only to God and not to any man or any state. I believe, for instance, that the command, "Thou shalt not kill," is a command also given to the state, and that a state does wrong in enforcing capital punishment. And if that is the case it would be wrong for it to demand that any man should become an executioner. Needless to say, it would also be wrong for the state to send soldiers to destroy other human beings.

But to every right there corresponds a correlative duty of someone else. Therefore it is the duty of the state not to molest these rights and to see that our private rights are not molested by others. If A has a right to X, then B, C, and D have a duty not to prevent A from doing X.

Apparently we are not duty bound to keep the law of Moses regarding adultery, for Jesus dispersed the accusers of the woman caught in adultery. If loving a man means, helping him to love God, then we certainly could not take the life of any man because thereby we would not help him to love God.

I do not regard the state as being amoral in a certain sense. To say the least we would still use the words "moral" or "immoral", in passing a moral judgment upon the state, in an elliptical way. Just like when we say, "That book is immoral," meaning that it makes men immoral.

We also speak of the laws of a country being just laws. By that we would mean that on the basis of these laws objects of interest would be alloted equally. If the authority is vested in the laws, then as far as the laws are just and are properly executed, I would call the state a moral state.

Louis XIV is said to have made a famous speech in the course of which he made the declaration, "I am France". Here the soul of the King of France may be identified with the empire. If we don't think that Satan is the soul of any of our present empires, it seems that he will be so in the Satanic-God-defying character of the world ruler pictured to us in prophecy.

Certainly we can conceive of a better and a worse state no matter whether the authority is vested in the laws or in a person or persons. The laws might be more just or less just, and the person may do his duty, or at least act in accordance with duty, more often or less often. For this reason I hold it possible to improve states without being completely optimistic and claiming that the kingdom will be ushered in by means of such possible improvement. In fact I believe we become guilty of not doing our duty, or call it the sin of omission if you like, if we do not warn the wicked as God instructed the prophet Ezekiel. We are not responsible for actual improvement in a person's relation to God or in the state beyond that duty. We are not allowed to use coercive force. So let us do our duty whether we see desirable results crowning

our labor or not. -- In a sense if the state would become moral it would cease to exist. On the other hand can something demand moral obedience which is itself amoral? The state is held responsible and in holding it to be responsible we must hold it to be moral. But if there is no moral foundation a state would again cease to exist. If the state is indifferent to morals it cannot maintain its laws and all its power would hardly be sufficient to cause people to obey.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The state is responsible to God for the administration of justice; for punishing the wicked and protecting the good.

2. A person ought to be obedient to such a state, in such a way that he is obedient unto God.

3. A disciple ought to belong to the class of good members of such a state and a disciple will be a good citizen.

4. If it is wrong for a disciple to hold some public office in such a state then he ought not to vote a Christian into that office.

5. In the case of a revolution a disciple will have to determine to which power he shall be obedient. e.g. The loyalists during the American revolution, or Nationalist and Communist China today.

6. On the basis of God's revealed will, a disciple will have to determine what is good and work toward that end so that God's will might be done on earth as it is in heaven.

7. On one definition of the state, it will cease to exist if it is founded on the Sermon on the Mount, that is on Christian love.

8. A Christian should nevertheless order his life on the principle of love and not on any legal code.

9. We ought to be able to establish a Christian Community of true Christians, but in our day, with our constant failings, such a community appears doomed to failure.

10. Christian love will imply the fulfillment of God's commandments because we will do what is right because it is right and not because of fear of the consequences.

11. Just like the feudal system had to give way to national sovereignty, the national system of states might have to give up its sovereignty in favor of an international sovereignty. In our day the survival of the human race appears to call for UN sovereignty.

12. A Christian should at all times obey his conscience and do what he believes to be right.

13. Since he may be mistaken in what he thinks is right, he should constantly study and pray for enlightenment.

14. Since rights involve correlative duties, a Christian should never violate the rights of others.

15. If another's rights are violated the disciple should give his moral support to the violated.

16. If a disciple's rights are violated he may feel that it is expedient not to demand his rights. e.g., I would not hold it right to kill in self-defence nor in defence of another.

17. Usually one can trace a vote, whether in an election or in a referendum, to some moral issues. Therefore, if a Disciple has clear convictions (sometimes he might be incompetent to judge) he should cast his vote for the better. We cannot expect to approve wholeheartedly but we certainly might favor one over the other. We might be able to voice our opinions in some other way, especially if the alternatives are equally unpleasant. If I remember correctly, we were advised in our Mennonite papers not to vote on the conscription issue in Canada during the last war. In my opinion we had a right to vote against war and ought to have done so. Or were we faced with the problem that while we were against war we still felt that the state had to engage in it to protect itself and us.

18. In our day psychological arguments for war based on protection of loved ones are dated. The general population suffers more than the soldier.

19. Christians should use all legal means that are morally sound in influencing the state to recognize its responsibility to its citizens and to other nations.

20. Where cooperation with the state involves the disciple in moral wrong, he should resort to noncooperation. However, it would be wrong for a disciple to use noncooperation merely for the purpose of obtaining a desirable end.

21. A disciple should prayerfully choose his occupation and if led to hold a government office, he should administrate it as a true child of God. He should not compromise his duty to God at any time. Daniel might serve as an example. It will be difficult to draw the line according to the office. I believe a Christian official could work for good in office and in extremeties he will have to refuse to cooperate. If that involves losing his office, he should take that with true grace. The difficulties are so great that one would not be advised to seek office unless called of God to do so.

22. We will all have to strive for greater consecration in our daily walk. Littell sees our danger in developing into a completely self-centered religious and economic community, in which the inevitable egotism of a group living in history is translated into a genuine technological and cultural as well as religious primitisism. We have great need of a spiritual revival in various areas of our life and if we should decide to exert greater influence in political life we will have to guard against new dangers.

the cross of [illegible]
ethics, though [illegible]
interpretation [illegible]
The Christian [illegible]
this kingdom [illegible]
contradict the [illegible]
to laws of the [illegible]
relationship to the [illegible]
Romans 13 must [illegible]

> 1. Let ev[illegible]
> power but of [illegible]
> therefore [illegible]
> that resist [illegible]
> not a terror [illegible]
> afraid of the [illegible]
> the same: [illegible]
> thou do that [illegible]
> vain: for [illegible]
> him that doeth [illegible]
> for wrath, [illegible]
> tribute also [illegible]
> this very thing. [illegible]
> tribute is due [illegible]
> honour. [illegible]
>
> adultery, [illegible]
> false w[illegible]
> it is briefly [illegible]
> neighbour as [illegible]
> Love is the [illegible]
> [illegible]

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THE NONCOMBATANT POSITION IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURES AND THE CIVILIAN ALTERNATIVE

D. J. Unruh

The Christian is a person redeemed by the redemptive work of Christ on the cross of Calvary. He is not merely a person who has adopted a new code of ethics, though in relationship to the civil government, this can be the only interpretation that a government can place upon a man's standard of conduct. The Christian is a citizen of a new kingdom, the kingdom of God. The laws of this kingdom supercede the laws of a civil government. They do not annul or contradict the laws of civil government, consequently the Christian is subject to laws of the land yet governed by laws of the kingdom of God. This is his relationship to the ethical standards of civil government. This is where Romans 13 must be considered.

> 1. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4. for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. 6. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. 8. Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth hath fulfilled the law. 9. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 10. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. 11. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. 13. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. 14. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

There is another consideration which we must bring to our attention, namely, that the Christian is a person who has been born again. He is a child of a new family, a member of a new order, the recipient of a new life, partaker of the divine nature, the heir of God, and a citizen of a holy nation. I Peter 2:9-17:

> 9. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: 10. which in time

past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12. Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. 13. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14. Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: 16. As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. 17. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

The great danger in Christendom is that we neglect, depreciate and depredate the spiritual and super-natural character of the Christian life and then become zealous for the cultural, the ethical and the moral principles of Christianity. Undoubtedly the kernel or the heart of the Christian life and message cannot be preserved without the shell or the protective covering of an ethical norm and the beauty and order of a well disciplined worship, but neither can we create or preserve a spiritual life by polishing the shell or dressing up religious mannequins. We must therefore, remember that in order to have Christian conduct you must have Christian life. Life is the result of an issue and culminates in the birth before there can be growth. This is the premise of Jesus conversation with Nicodemus in John 3 and is the clear teaching of I Peter 1:23, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Only members of the kingdom of God are subject to the laws of the kingdom of God. Men may attempt to imitate or simulate the principles of the Sermon on the Mount but it is beyond the comprehension or the ability of the natural man to do so for only to "the pure in heart" is the promise that "they shall see God." Matthew 5:8.

This then brings us to the heart of our problem. Shall the Christian engage in non-combatant military service? I believe that protection by the use of force is not necessarily evil but mutual exchange of force with it's consequent destruction of life and property is evil. Here we are compelled to choose whether we are to be a part of an evil order or whether we will refrain from any participation in military destruction.

Wars are never clear-cut issues of moral or immoral problems. The use of force is a - moral or unmoral but primarily under immoral control, i.e., protection is not immoral, organized protection is not immoral, but bi-lateral aggression and bi-lateral protection is immoral. This in my estimation places the program of military service under condemnation, yet it does not remove the necessity and duty of protection from us.

This I think is illustrated in the neef for, and the organized protection which the Mennonites organized in Russia, during the days of banditry, robbery, plunder and mass rapings of their women, which were released by the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary days of Russia's revolution and brigandage. Today there is no deliverance from injustices, or forceful separation of families, for the citizens in Russia except to escape to other lands and governments whose protective arm guarantees certain freedoms and the just administration of law and order.

What then should the Christian's position be in reference to the military program. Non-combatant service is classified as constructive service under the military arm of the government. It is a preventative service whereby many fatalities may be prevented. It is a position that recognized the protective arm of the government but does not endorse it's method. My rights as a citizen require certain responsibilities and my privileges are coupled with certain duties. To be protected, what are my responsibilities to protect others.

The alien who becomes a citizen of this country is required to take an oath of allegiance to defend and protect this country, by the use of arms if necessary. Many a conscientious soul has hesitated to take such an oath and yet most of us exercise all the rights of citizenship and forget that thereby we give tacit assent to a governmental system that incorporates all of these principles in its form of existence and practice.

Maybe that's what's wrong with our Mennonite testimony. The only ones who are asked to form active and practical decisions on non-resistance are the young and immature members who are asked to make all the sacrifices and do all the witnessing while the older members give tacit approval to all the advantages of protection and to the economic and social gains, and bear none of the reproaches nor suffer any economic losses. It is my firm conviction that until we have given a positive witness to the power of the gospel to transform the lives of sinners into saints, we will not be effective witnesses by a negative testimony of saying we do not believe in war, we cannot go to war. The world is not interested in what we cannot do as Christians but will be tremendously interested in what we can do. We must be able to demonstrate that there are some things that we can do, that only a Christian can do.

There are certain charitable projects which we have assumed and upon which we have laid much emphasis. They are rightly classified as civilian service. We believe that the government has a right to require a service which has a practical civilian value, but our claim for exemption from military duty is not a claim on civil grounds but upon spiritual grounds. We are civil subjects but not bond-servants to the government. We are subjects to the government (der Obrigkeit untertan). We should not abjectly, nor evasively serve in civilian service to escape the unpleasantness of military life but, accepting a substitute service for military service, we should aggressively and effectively as ambassadors of good-will proclaim the reconciling work of Christ on Calvary and bring men and women into the kingdom of God throughthe experience of the new birth. If we fail in this, we will progressively fail in spiritual power and go down the declining slope of the social gospel, state socialism, followed by regimentation, dictatorship and tyranny.

Therefore, I believe we should look at our position in reference to military service in the light of a witness. For lack of a better term I would use the term evangelistic witness. I realize that the term has some questionable connotations but it is not the terminology but the abuse of the terminology that is at fault. Let us evangelize in the New Testament sense of the word, and restore among us the scriptural and original beauty and meaning of the term. We must evangelize or fossilize. The danger that overtook the religious leaders of Jesus day, "that we become whitened sepulchres full of dead men's bones" is just as real today as it was then.

Which is the most effective place of witness? Shall we do evil that good may come from it? I believe that there is neither the necessity nor the advisability to take up military service in order to witness to the men in

uniform. I believe that it is possible for a man to be a Christian and be in the military branch of governmental service, but it is not the consecrated Christian way. Some ministers, including some radio ministers, glorify the Christian in uniform. I believe this is a false emphasis. We should recognize the Christian in spite of the uniform.

The young man who accepts non-combatant service may not always realize to what extent this complicates him with the military program. He may be more seriously mistaken in his choices, than in his motive. When men are motivated by the desire to effectively witness for the Lord Jesus Christ we should be charitable in our judgment but recognize our responsibility in helping him in his choices, and to a better understanding of what the will of God is for his life.

We believe that the Christian in civilian public service can more effectively witness for his Saviour. He must not depend merely on his silent testimony of witnessing, important as that may be. He must contribute that "plus" in service which only the Christian can give. The art of healing is not in itself a Christian art. The skill of the nurse or the attendant in a hospital is not itself a Christian skill, and becomes Christian only when dedicated to Christian purposes.

We at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kansas, have tried to clarify this objective in the following recommendation:

> The Board of Deacons recommends that the parents and relatives, as well as the young men of our church of military draft age, encourage one another to maintain the scriptural testimony of non-resistance when they register for classification and service under the U.S. Selective Service Board. We are particularly concerned that our testimony in reference to war and military service should be a positive, aggressive, evangelical and evangelistic program of winning souls for the Lord Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God. It is not enough to be against war, and the destruction of life and property, we must present a gospel of peace with God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour from sin and warn men against losing their souls. We would encourage our young people both young men and young women, to engage in evangelistic soul-winning while at home and when called to serve away from home. We would also counsel them to consider the opportunities of an evangelistic witness in voluntary service and encourage them to enlist in such service as a "plus" Christian service. "And whosoever (i.e. U.S. Selective Service) shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." Matthew 5:41.

We believe there is a difference in the function of the State, which deals with all society, and the function of the Church, which deals with God's chosen and redeemed people. There is and must be a clear separation of Church and State. The Church should deal with her problems according to the principles of charity given to the Church in the New Testament. The State cannot govern according to the principles of the Church but must govern according to moral and temporal standards equal to the level of her constituency, and God's eternal laws of justice and righteousness.

Does this mean that the Christian has no voice in the State? On the contrary, he has a sacred responsibility to the State, to pray for it, to pay tribute, to give it loyalty or honor and recognition, and to be subject for

Conscience sake. He is not to resist it, but to obey magistrates and to be ready to every good work. (Rom. 13:1-7, Titus 3:1, I Peter 2:13-14). The Christian is not to be anti-state, nor the serf of the State, but a citizen owing allegiance to and receiving the protection of the State, yet never allowing the State to dictate or decree in the realm of our individual relationshup and responsibility to God.

This relationship of the child of God to the civil government under which he lives is well illustrated in the book of Daniel. God's people were under the jurisdiction of a wordly government. They served conscientiously, with fidelity to the king, and were promoted for their service, yet retained self-control and personal purity, according to their religious convictions and their relationship to God. (Daniel 1:3 - 21, Daniel 3). Daniel himself served under three worldly regimes, certainly none of them godly even though God appointed. (Daniel 2:21, Rom. 13:1). Daniel was a conscientious objector to the attempt of the government to dictate his worship and obedience to God. Daniel was a conscientious objector to the usurpation of governmentover conscience and he was a devout believer in the revelation of God. He believed in the protection and preservation by God of His people. His relationship to the government was characterized by serving the government in every righteous cause yet with implicit obedience to the will of God. (Daniel 6).

Dark days have come upon us. Sin and immorality are evident in high places and in low. Greed and pride and self-gratification and lust and pleasure are leaving their victims in poverty, and disease, and moral filth, enslaved in body, debased and depraved in soul and spirit. "Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. 3:14-18).

Yet there is peace. "My peace I give unto you." (John 14:27). "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This Word of God which produces faith in Christ and brings peace to the soul, we must preach and shun all compromise or substitutes. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace," (Rom. 10:15), "preaching peace by Jesus Christ." (Acts 10:36).

"Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin
The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

"Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging 'round
On Jesus bosom naught but calm is found.

"Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown,
Jesus we know, and He is on the throne."

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THE NONCOMBATANT POSITION IN THE LIGHT OF THE SCRIPTURES AND ALTERNATIVE SERVICE

John C. Sawatzky

The world has become much smaller within the last half-century. As a result of developments, notably in respect to means of communication, people have discovered that there are many other people in the world -- people with various objectives and ways of life. Since they have discovered that they are now more or less neighbors a significant process of adjustment is taking place. Perhaps little constructive adaptation is in evidence because the world is characterized by tensions and conflicts, the scope of which have never been attained before. The situation reveals, amongst other things, a vast absence of spiritual and moral values. But perhaps the circumstances are also significant in that there is now a greater focus on responsibility. Everybody has to stand up and be counted and nobody can really escape.

And so we, who are Mennonites, are faced with a reckoning; we have to declare ourselves and face up to deciding what we believe to be our spiritual and social obligations.

We can hardly resort to escape, as we did for centuries, for there are no "comfortable" places left in the world. An indication of our crisis is that perhaps the greatest period of soul-searching in the history of the Mennonites in respect to our basic beliefs and our role in society has occurred within the past ten years. We are here today because the search is still in progress. If we fail to find ourselves soon we may not have further opportunities.

One of our taks at hand is to assist in the process of developing a framework of policy with tangible applications for the purpose of assuming our responsibilities in the light of our Christian beliefs with particular reference to nonresistance. While the subject requires and is receiving broad examination, the particular object of this paper is to consider our position in respect to several courses of action developed in the United States and Canada, namely, Noncombatant Service within military organizations and a variety of civilian endeavours under the heading of Alternative Service.

The Noncombatant Position

Perhaps the main support for this kind of service lies in the fact that it is considered to be a constructive action program largely because it affords opportunity for direct relief of suffering. Further, the role of the noncombatant does not remove him from the mainstream of society but keeps him in contact with those people whom he should possibly influence the most. In other words, the role provides a chance for exercice of visible and otherwise real responsibility. In terms of New Testament support for this we find that Jesus himself did not refrain from active contact with people whom he considered to be sinners and perhaps even opposed to his principles. According to Luke 7: 1-10 we find that he kindly ministered to a centurion and his household, warmly commended the man's faith and did not condemn his occupation or ask him to abandon it.

However, the more one examines the way of life and the teachings of Christ the more one realizes that his nonresistance has a clean-cut well defined position and really does not afford opportunity for rationalization or compromise.

For numerous reasons, the noncombatant position, as presently constituted in our respective countries, is one in which the ideals seem to be compromised. From the point of view of principle, the position is highly related to the objectives and operations of the military organization of which it is a part. From the point of view of practice, there are numerous difficulties. The nonresistant's way of life is so different from that of the resistant's that it is difficult for the latter to appreciate or even comprehend the position of the former. This gives rise to tensions and resulting abuses which frequently make the life of the noncombatant difficult. This occurs particularly in a time of national emergency when emotional anxieties are prevalent. Social pressures for conformity represent a further problem. This is particularly significant because the cultural traditions of the North American people with whom we live are similar to ours and there is a strong tendency for us to want to assimilate. Since the noncombatant is frequently isolated from the fellowship of other conscientious objectors his faith must be strong to withstand the pressures brought to bear on him.

In Canada, Mennonite attitudes towards this type of service have been influenced to a large extent by their experience in Russia with a medical service which was more truly noncombatant and was not part of a military organization. However, it seems to be realized now that the terms of reference of the so-called Restricted Medical Corps, which existed in Canada during the recent war, represented a compromise. One of the major difficulties lies in the fact that neither the Church nor the individuals directly involved in the noncombatant service have much control in the development of policies and in the administration of the program.

Alternative Service

Alternative Service arrangements provided in both Canada and the United States are naturally more in keeping with the nonresistance Christian belief insofar as they entail civilian duties not contributing directly to military efforts. They also have the advantage of group identification which contributes to spiritual and social morale. Policy and administrative arrangements have usually been such that the Church has very considerable control.

However, in my opinion, the main problem with the Alternative Service program in most instances is that the nature of the work does not involve a degree of responsibility in keeping with the role of the Christian. This may not represent the chief reason for dissatisfaction on the part of the men in Alternative Service but it must have played a part. Does a Christian with a full sense of responsibility feel content with building roads or cutting trees when almost the entire world is in the throes of conflict and suffering? Can the nonresistance believer feel satisfied with watching from the side-lines while people kill one another with greater ease and efficiency than ever before? Surely the role of nonresistance need not be a negative or a passive one implying that nothing should be done about the disbelievers or for those who suffer by them.

Some of the attempts to justify the Alternative Service program on the basis of what wonderful contributions were made by the boys in the camps are not very impressive. Speeches about the roads in our National Parks being a monument to the service rendered by our young men sound rather weak. We must remember that these roads were built at a time when millions of people (not necessarily including military personnel) were exposed to hunger, cold, spiritual depredation and death. And I think it could go without saying that the young men in the camps were not unmindful of this and not unaware of the potential opportunities for more significant and responsible service. If we continue to be satisfied with easy ways out nonresistance beliefs on the part of Mennonites will probably not survive much longer -- not because of pressures from without but because of disillusionment from within.

Weakening of the Faith

Evidence for the fact that Mennonites are in trouble with respect to their faith is that the majority of young men drafted during World War II voluntarily entered military services. In looking back over my own experience in Mennonite communities, including both eastern and western Canada, there is little recollection of nonresistance having been stressed or that it was a significant part of the daily attitudes in Mennonite groups. My impression is that in many quarters nonresistance was hardly more than a matter of social culture. It is known that there is a heritage of nonresistance and this distinguished Mennonites from other Protestant Churches for centuries. Many of us have rested our consciences on this heritage, assume that we have sort of inherited this belief and have not found it necessary to develop the essential underlying personal faith.

But then, during the recent war, some Churches became alarmed by their young members not remaining in the tradition and they began to tighten up their regulations. While young members in some of the Churches were being expelled for being in military services, many of the older members, who had voted for expulsion, were reading the news of German army victories on the western front with considerable satisfaction. Political attitudes, naively prompted by racial identification, were further evidence of the shallow condition of Christian faith. The young men at this time were confused by the inconsistent attitudes of their seniors and they indicated their lack of development of sincere beliefs by rejecting Alternative Service and joining combatant military organizations.

In America perhaps a factor in the weakening of the faith has been the lack of wars. This may sound ludicrous but has not much of our thinking about nonresistance been that it primarily signifies non-participation in armed conflict?

A further problem we have is that we are permitting ourselves be deceived to some extent by the culture of the people with whom we live. In many ways the culture of North America contains ideals and ways of living with which we are sympathetic. The people are mainly Protestant, they are concerned with individual freedom, social and economic justice and they are not interested in war. But the high standard of material living has made some aspects of life easy and there is increasing evidence of moral decline. While the pioneers of our countries used their energy for developing basic things such as religious freedom, self-government and physical necessities of life, the population now seems dedicated to achieving more Cadillacs and television aerials. Spiritual

and moral values have largely been replaced by material values. Have we not gone a long way with this trend? While it is disillusioning does it not also point out that we have a big job to do right here at home?

A further problem today is the thinking that social and material welfare will cure the ills of mankind. Extensive developments in the physical and social sciences have fooled people into believing that the problems of the world, including war, can be solved by knowledge and its skilful application. Faith in God is being replaced by faith in science.

However, the more immediate task is to examine our position in respect to what tangible service programs we maintain or develop in the light of a basic nonresistant interpretation of the Scriptures. I have stated that, in my opinion, the noncombatant position is difficult to defend in the light of basic interpretation and that the difficulty lies in both principle and practice. My view is also that many of the Alternative Service arrangements, particularly those which existed in Canada during the recent war, are not in keeping with our responsibilities as Christians. It seems to me that the answer lies in the development of a genuine and truly responsible Alternative Service program.

There are some developments which should make this more readily possible. The ways of war have changed drastically in the past ten years and will likely change even more in the future. Formerly, wars were fought chiefly by armies and so the actual combat areas were limited. But the use of airplanes, long range projectiles, electronic equipment and powerful explosives, such as the atom bomb, have revised that. Even in World War II the inhabitants of the British Isles, the Netherlands, Germany, France, etc. discovered that they were all in the front lines -- as we too might well be if an atomic war should erupt tomorrow. Modern warfare utilizes more materials and the production of these by civilians has resulted in targets being everywhere. The ravages of future wars are likely to be widespread and may affect the entire population of nations. Hence, is it not reasonable to expect that our respective governments could be interested in letting us develop a civilian humanitarian service?

It seems to me that the Mennonite Central Committee has made a significant beginning with its Voluntary Service program. Perhaps its appeal could be increased by broadening its scope and giving it more specific meaning. Perhaps a unit or corps within the M.C.C. specifically designated for the purpose outlined here would be needed. Such a corps -- called something like "Christian Service Corps" -- could do continuous work in needy areas and be available for serving people affected by flood, fire or famine anywhere in the world. In Canada, even if there is no conscription as yet, a lot of planning and organization is required instead of chiefly keeping an eye on the war clouds and surveying government attitudes.

Regardless of what organizational and administrative arrangements are desirable to achieve the aim, it seems to me that the principle is that the service be active and significant, affording young men and women a real opportunity for witnessing for Christ and for doing humanitarian work. Young people urgently require an active cause in which they can develop and express their spiritual and physical energies in a responsible manner. Therein lies the hope for developing, maintaining and eventually expanding the nonresistance Christian belief and way of life.

THE NONCOMBATANT POSITION IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURES AND THE CIVILIAN ALTERNATIVE

Carl Lehman

Inasmuch as 14.5% of all drafted Mennonites in the U.S. during World War II were in non-combatant service with a non-combatant classification, no serious discussion on conscientious objection would be complete without a thorough consideration of this position. We will confine our discussion to two choices. Should a young man being drafted choose the non-combatant position or should he choose the altnerative Service position? It is important that these limits are noted at the outset. No attempt will be made to establish the case for conscientious objection. For our discussion it is assumed. Neither will we consider the absolutist position, not because we flatly reject it, but only to confine the discussion to the issue at hand.

It should be especially noted that the choice between combatant and the non-combatant military positions will not be treated. Many who have chosen the non-combatant position no doubt have actually chosen between the regular combatant and the non-combatant rather than between the non-combatant and the alternative positions. Their problem was focused on the question of whether or not they were conscientious objectors. We are primarly concerned at this point with the young man who knows that he is a conscientious objector, but is not sure whether he should take the non-combatant or the alternative service position.

ARGUMENTS GIVEN FOR THE NON-COMBATANT POSITION

Careful consideration needs to be given to each of the following eleven arguments often advanced in favor of the non-combatant position. As we examine the arguments it will be assumed that they are sincerely given by persons who are either seeking light on this problem or who are expressing a conviction. We will not be able to give much help to those who are merely using them as excuses. During World War II a certain young man from one of our Indiana churches said that he would have a much better opportunity to win souls for Christ in the army than he would in CPS. His argument would have deserved more attention had there been any indication that he had attempted to win souls for Christ before he was drafted!

Argument No. 1. "The non-combatant soldier obeys the commandment, 'THOU SHALT NOT KILL'. He is therefore obedient to the teachings of Scripture."

This argument is no doubt basic to the thinking of those who have taken the non-combatant position. If the killing act itself were the all important consideration the argument would carry more weight than it does. Jesus stated clearly that the motive is even more important than the act itself. (Matthew 5:21-22). Before taking this position we need to do more than ask ourselves whether we will have to perform the killing act. Do we want the man killed? Do we want his children destroyed with our bombs? If we do, we at that point have broken the commandment in our hearts. If we do not want him killed or his children destroyed, is it right that we should be working for others to help them do this deed? Let us make no mistake about it, the army is in the killing business. When we take the oath of allegiance to the army

we take the oath of allegiance to the killing business. The regular soldier understands this. The non-combatant soldier should not be blind to it.

Argument No. 2. "BUT YOU ARE ONLY BINDING UP WOUNDS AS A NON-COMBATANT SOLDIER. IT IS NEVER WRONG TO BIND UP WOUNDS!"

All of us will sympathize with anyone who is sincerely interested in binding up wounds. Before we rush into it however we ought to ask ourselves whether our being in the medical corps will increase the size and effectiveness of the medical corps? Might we not even in effect crowd someone else out of the medical corps and on to the combat field who have been even better qualified to bind up wounds than we? Is it not true that the most significant effect of our presence in the medical corps is an increase in the capacity of the army to kill? Would not the wounds be bound up even if we were not there?

In his statement at the Winona Lake Peace Study Conference in 1950, Melvin Gingerich quotes Dr. Frank L. Apperly as follows: "The great lesson that every medical officer must know, first, foremost and all the time, is that his job is to keep the fighting ranks full, i.e. to keep fit men fit, physically and mentally, and to get slightly sick or wounded men back to the ranks as quickly as possible. After that he may attend to his more humanitarian duties, to tend, comfort and evacuate the severely wounded and the permanently disabled."

If we as consientious objectors are really interested in binding up wounds we ought not give our allegiance to an army which is chiefly in the wounding and killing business.

Argument No. 3. "YOU CAN NOT DIVORCE YOURSELF FROM PARTICIPATION - - EVEN THE FARMER GROWING WHEAT PARTICIPATES".

We will have to admit the truth of this argument. It would indeed be difficult to find a war time occupation in which no one would be able to divert some of the fruits of our labor into the war effort. The argument however does not favor the non-combatant position at all, for if even a farmer is guilty how much more is the non-combatant soldier!

Actually this is not a problem unique to participation in war, for we face it in life all the time. Some of the farmers' grain is made into malt and some of the malt is made into Milwaukee beer. We do not because of this condemn the farmer who continues to grow grain. We would however raise our eyebrows if a Mennonite minister were employed as a full time chaplain by the Milwaukee brewery!

The sincerity of a conscientious objector is established by the extent to which he tries to remove himself from the killing business rather than by how close he tries to come to cooperating with it.

Argument No. 4. "THE NON-COMBATANT SOLDIER CAN WITNESS FOR CHRIST TO LARGE NUMBERS OF YOUNG MEN AT A TIME WHEN THEY ESPECIALLY NEED STRONG TESTIMONY."

If a young man is sincere in this desire he will do well to speak to as many World War II non-combatant veterans as possible, and see what they have

to say about it. If after talking to them he still feels that he could be an effective witness, let him examine himself very carefully. Is he sure that he, a conscientious objector to killing in war will be able to give himself with a clear conscience to the killing business? If there is any doubt at all in his mind he would better not get into it. Bearing a strong testimony for Christ is not the task of a man with a guilty conscience.

Argument No. 5. "YOU WILL BE ABLE TO BE A MORE EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN IN THE DAYS AHEAD IF YOU DO NOT NOW ISOLATE YOURSELF FROM THE ACTIVITY AND THINKING OF THE MAIN STREAM OF SOCIETY."

Those who have not experienced the questioning look or open scorn which is a common experience of conscientious objectors may not fully appreciate the weight of this argument on the mind of the serious young man who is trying to make the right decision. The sincere conscientious objector however will guard against isolating himself from society in the first place. If he has light, why should he "hide it under a bushel"? He needs to have a sense of mission to society, and never the feeling that he must withdraw himself. Actually most men who were in CivilianPublich Service and Canadian Alternative Service during the last war were surprised at how well they were accepted after the war was over.

The real question is whether or not you are true to the best that you know and believe. Unless you are, you can not be the most effective Christian, regardless of your position. If you are true, God will probably have a place for you in our society. Remaining true to our convictions opens more doors than it closes.

Argument No. 6. "WE LIVE IN A COUNTRY WITH UNUSUAL PRIVILEGES. SOME OF THEM WERE WON FOR US BY MEN WHO LOST THEIR LIVES DOING WHAT WE SAY WE CAN NOT CONSCIENTIOUSLY DO. WE SHOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE WITHIN THE REALM OF CONSCIENCE TO SERVE SUCH A COUNTRY PARTICULARLY SINCE THERE IS A SERIOUS THREAT FROM ATHEISTIC COMMUNISM."

The sincere follower of Christ will always take a constructive attitude toward the group of which he is a part. However the father who does not approve when his son raids a melon patch is not being very constructive when he accompanies him on all his escapades with a first aid kit prepared for sudden emergencies! If what his son is doing is right he might just as well carry some of the melons himself. If what the armed forces are doing is right why should we not go out with them and get our hands dirty too in the messy job of killing other people? The non-combatant soldier who becomes a soldier because he wants to serve his country is saying that what the other boys are doing is right. Somebody has to do the killing only he himself is too good to do it. If every non-combatant soldier could see himself in this light there would not be very many non-combatant soldiers. If somebody has to do a lot of killing so that the needs of our country will be met, why should Christians of all people hesitate to do what has to be done?

How can anyone seriously be a conscientious objector unless he believes that taking part in war is a sin against God and humanity--that it will do more harm to humanity than good? If he believes that, he knows that he is not serving the best interests of his country when he participates in war.

Argument No. 7. "IT IS NOT FAIR THAT SOME SHOULD BE CALLED TO THE FRONT LINES WHILE WE SIT BACK IN SAFETY."

A true Christian with a sense of fairness and justice will sympathize with this viewpoint. The serious Christian is never content to sit back while others do a dangerous and important job. If on the other hand he sincerely believes that what others are doing is a terrible mistake and wrong in the sight of God he is not being fair to anyone by joining them in what they are doing. He will not just sit back, but will do everything he can to promote what is good and according to the will of God.

Argument No. 8. "SOME OF THE WORK DONE IN CIVILIAN PUBLIC SERVICE AND CANADIAN ALTERNATE SERVICE WAS "BUSY WORK" NOT SIGNIFICANT ENOUGH TO BE CONTINUED EVEN DURING THE PEACE TIME WHICH FOLLOWED THE WAR."

No one was more painfully aware of this than some of the CPS and ASW men themselves. They moved on into more significant jobs as fast as they were allowed to do so. It must be borne in mind however that to do nothing is not always worse than to do the wrong thing, regardless of platitudes to the contrary. It is better for a doctor to do nothing for his patient than to give him a large dose of medicine from an unlabeled bottle which he believes to be arsenic. Sometimes the most positive thing a man can do is to stop going in the wrong direction. To continue going in the wrong direction only at a slower pace, as the non-combatant soldier does, would seem somewhat less positive than stopping altogether.

Argument No. 9. "THERE ARE YOUNG MEN OF UNDISPUTED SINCERITY AND DEEP CHRISTIAN CONVICTION WHO HAVE TAKEN THE NON-COMBATANT POSITION."

That, we are certain, is true. Sincerity in whatever we do is always of prime importance. Even the staunchest conscientious objector has more respect for the sincere soldier than he has for the insincere conscientious objector. But we would not think of persecuting Christians just because Saul of Tarsus could do it conscientiously!

Argument No. 10. "WAR IS A NATURAL, UNAVOIDABLE CONSEQUENCE OF A RACE IN A STATE OF SIN. THE CHRISTIAN IN SUCH A SOCIETY CAN NOT THRUST THE CHRISTIAN METHOD OF COMBATING EVIL ON A GOVERNMENT WHICH IS FORCED TO USE ONLY SUCH METHODS AS THE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND AND WILL USE. THE NON-COMBATANT POSITION CONSEQUENTLY IS AN ATTEMPT TO APPLY AS MUCH CHRISTIANITY INTO THIS RIGID FRAMEWORK AS IS REALISTICALLY POSSIBLE."

There is one assumption in this argument which we would question. If it were true that "war is a natural, unavoidable consequence of a race in a state of sin" then there would be no non-christian races or tribes anywhere who are not committed to warfare. Yet there are tribes who have no record of warfare. It is to be hoped that some day Christians will not blame all their troubles on non-Christians, but will assume some serious responsibilities which are their own. There have been enough Christians on both sides of every major war for the last five hundred years to have made that war impossible. Perhaps there will always be wars and rumors of wars, as there will always be sin. But that is no reason why Christians should continue to live in sin and thus greatly add to the misery of the world.

Argument No. 11. "THERE ARE SO MANY WHO HAVE FOUND THE NON-COMBATANT POSITION THEIR CHOICE THAT THE CHURCH SHOULD OFFICIALLY RECONGIZE THE POSITION AS AN ADEQUATE EXPRESSION OF THE NON-RESISTANT FAITH AND THEREBY ALLOW THIS POSITION TO FIND ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE IN ADDING TO THE TOTAL NON-RESISTANT RESOURCES OF THE CHURCH."

Most of us will always hope that our churches continue to deal sympathetically with sincere non-combatant as well as with combatant soldiers. However there could be no lasting gain in accepting as an official position of the church a statement so divergant from our historic views, unless of course our views and the best thinking in the church have actually changed. If the church itself expresses no conviction on the matter then how could we expect our eighteen, nineteen, and twenty year old young men to have any convictions.

ARGUMENTS FOR ALTERNATIVE SERVICE POSITION

So far we have dealt chiefly with arguments favoring the non-combatant position and have attempted to show why they are not valid. Sometimes we have been so much on the defensive as non-resistant Christians that we have failed to stress the more positive aspects of our faith. We have already dealt with the argument that is so often used in favor of both combatant and non-combatant service, namely that they are more positive than the "busy work" of Civilian Public Service and the safe berth of the present I-W alternative service worker. We have but to look at a few accomplishments of the CPS program to note that in spite of its weaknesses there was nothing like it accomplished anywhere by those who took the non-combatant position.

(1) There has been a tremendous awakening in the American Conscience concerning the care of the mentally ill during the past decade. The hundreds of CPS men who worked in mental hospitals during the war probably had as much to do with this as any other influence.

(2) Mennonites of all kinds were brought closer together. Only a program like the CPS program could have enabled us to understand one another as well as we have, and further enabled us to unite more fully in the world wide service program of the Mennonite Central Committee. Non-combatant service could not have done this.

(3) Our voluntary service program had its seeds and many of its roots in the CPS program. Our young people are getting a taste of missionary work and life, and of service to the unfortunate. Nothing like it has grown out of non-combatant service.

(4) There is today a fast growing mission field in Puerto-Rico which had its beginnings in a CPS unit. Five Mennonite churches have already been organized on an island where ten years ago the name Mennonite was almost completely unknown.

CONCLUSION

War may well be the No. 1 problem of the 20th Century. A clear cut, all out testimony can be extremely important. As non-resistant Christians we have a greater responsibility than most of us realize. If we have anything to

say to the world regarding peace and war it ought to be said in no uncertain terms. The alternative service man, we believe, is doing this more effectively than the non-combatant soldier.

The alternative service man is the only one who has an opportunity to make a clear cut contribution to the relief of suffering humanity in the name of Christ. The non-combatant soldier does not have a Pax program. Finally, Jesus said, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matthew 5:44-45. The non-combatant man has made commitments which virtually make it impossible for him to do this effectively. The alternative service man can.

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TOWARD A REVIVED PEACE POSITION IN OUR CONFERENCE

J. W. Fretz

The wording of this topic deserves a moment of attention. It has a three fold implication. It suggests: 1. that our Conference does not now have a peace position; 2. that it once had a peace position and 3. that an effort is being made toward reviving that which has been lost. This topic seems to me accuratedly worded. While on paper our Conference has a stated position and while at its triannual general sessions it reaffirms the historic Mennonite peace principles, the facts of the case reveal that only a minority of the church members who face the draft actually adhere to this position. When seventy-three percent of the drafted men in World War II accepted or deliberately chose some form of military service, in the face of a legally provided alternative, and in the face of an officially declared position of our Conference against such a course, the facts are clear. It is a shocking situation and one is tempted to soften it by a variety of rationalizations, explanations, and justifications but that would only relieve the immediate inner pain. It would not alter the actual circumstances.

"Toward a Revived Peace Position" is therefore a realistic phrasing of the topic before us. Webster defines "revive" as meaning: "To restore to consciousness, to raise from langour or discouragement; to render active or flourishing again; to recover from a state of neglect or disuse; to restore, reestablish; to renew in the mind or memory; to reawaken, and refresh." The assumption underlying this paper is, therefore, that while the General Conference, adheres theoretically to the principle of Biblical nonresistance, the majority of its drafted members do not. Drafted men are not of course the entire church membership yet there is strong suspicion for believing that a majority of church members share the views of the drafted men.

A clue to this assumption is the indifference of the average congregation to the fact that its young men choose or accept full military service. Where this is the case it means that the General Conference peace statement cannot be taken seriously where it says:

> "We believe that war is altogether contrary to the teaching and spirit of Christ and the Gospel; that therefore war is sin... Therefore, if we profess the principle of peace and nevertheless engage in warfare and strife, we as Christians become guilty of sin and fall under the condemnation of Christ the righteous judge."

To take this statement seriously and yet justify participation in war would place one in the embarrassing position of trying to justify sin. A distinguised Christian gentleman recently observed about Mennonites that they are much more shocked to discover their women smoking or wearing shorts than they are at their men participating in military service as regular soldiers. I think we must admit the penitrating truth of this observation and if we examine the implications of it we must admit being guilty of a kind of pharisaic straingin at knats and swollowing of camels.

Past Efforts at Strengthening our Peace Position

Before listing several concrete suggestions about ways of reviving our peace position in the General Conference let me state briefly what has been done and is now being done toward this end. After the end of World War I several efforts were made to arouse interest in the Mennonite peace position but there was only scattered and feeble response. With the coming of World War II our Conference Peace Committee became active and, in cooperation with the MCC Peace Section, carried on a vigorous program of service and education. Many articles, pamphlets, and books have been written and distributed, Peace institutes have been conducted on college campuses and local congregations; district peace committees have been organized or revitalized; many ministers have preached Biblical nonresistance more vigorously as an integral aspect of the full Gospel; individual congregations have organized peace committees, and college students have organized peace clubs composed of those wanting to learn more about the peace position. Bethel College has been offering a course on Peace Principles every year for the past four years. There is a small and dynamic minority of consecrated preachers and lay leaders actively interested in strengthening the peace position in our conference. They are doing much to stir indifferent and lethargic brethren on this issue, but they are only a minority. One of the most encouraging aspects of this entire problem is the dynamic and tremendously challenging program of voluntary service which is being participated in by consecrated young people. But here too, it affects only a minority directly.

The point I want to make here is that the element within our conference membership that repudiates the doctrine of nonresistance cannot be said to do so for lack of information. There is now an abundance of literature on the subject from both Mennonite and non-Mennonite sources and everywhere ministers and teachers are available as counsellors for those who feel the need of guidance and interpretation on a variety of matters ranging from the Scriptures to the draft law. It may well be true that many of our members do not understand the alternative service program, the draft law, voluntary service or the implications of the nonresistant principle, but it cannot be said to be due to a lack of available information and help. The plain facts seem to be that the majority of our young men of draft age have no religious conviction against participation in military service. It can no longer be said that men accept such service to avoid persecution or to avoid openly defying the state since the government now recognizes the rights of conscience.

Not only draft-age men but a large number of church members-at-large must be said to have surrendered the position of biblical non-resistance. They may have done so either through neglect and indifference or as a result of cool deliberation and logical reasoning. In preparation for the writing of this paper I wrote to about fifty ministers asking for their counsel. Of those who replied, one shared this interesting observation. In his church he estimated that there were only about ten percent who adhered to the nonresistant position. The other ninety percent, who did not hold to this position, he said, were either fundamentalists or pagans. In other words, within a single congregation, both those who are well versed in the Scriptures and those who are biblically illiterate rejected biblical nonresistance.

A significant number of church members in our conference are openly and freely rejecting the nonresistant position. There are various reasons given for this repudiation. They range all the way from the realistic

pragmatist who thinks nonresistance is too idealistic to the orthodox biblicist who argues with Luther from Paul that the Christian must obey the state in all things, whether right or wrong. The only reason for mentioning these factors here is that they must be taken into consideration in dealing with any proposed remedies. In all too many congregations nonresistance is such a delicate subject that ministers refrain from discussing it and they warn visitors to be careful lest discussion alienate members or even lead to church splits.

What Needs to be Done?

In trying to present some concrete proposals which might result in a revived peace position in our Conference, it should be said at the outset that we must begin where we are. This, I think, we have tried to do thus far in this peace conference. We have tried to analyze our present situation. We have frankly examined our shortcomings in the light of our professed ideals. Let us now begin to think of the slower, more difficult and more painful job of outlining a method whereby our confessed weaknesses may be overcome and our professed goals more perfectly attained. Lost ground must be regained gradually and step by step just as it was lost. It cannot be done quickly by decree. A religious principle like a personal reputation is always easier to lose than to gain. I shall make these suggestions in the form of five concrete proposals.

I. Search The Scriptures

The first proposal for reviving our peace position in the General Conference is that we begin by carefully searching the Scriptures. I am convinced that we will find in them clear and unmistakable instructions that true disciples of Jesus Christ should not and cannot participate in war and military service any more in the Twentieth Century than they could in the first. I am convinced further, that we will discover with Menno Simons and the Anabaptists that the regenerated do not go to war and fight.

If this assumption is correct as to what I expect we will find as a result of searching the Scriptures it would then follow that we recognize the error of our ways and repent. This would mean that as individuals, as congregations and as district conferences we ask God's forgiveness for our indifference, our worldliness, our self-seeking and our general departure from the narrow road of true discipleship. At the same time we repent and confess we must also ask for Divine help to carry out our earnest desire to be living witnesses of God's love in an unpeaceful world. We must see nonresistance, not as mere social idealism or as an easy road in the face of militarization and conscription, but as a clear course of action dictated by Almighty God and revealed and demonstrated by Jesus Christ, His Son as the way for all His children to walk.

This first proposal assumes that our individual and corporate repentance would be led by our spiritual leaders, the ministers. The following quotation from a letter from one of our ministers who has more recently come to see the "nonresistant light" speaks clearly and emphatically to the point.

> "The best way to revive, strengthen and maintain the peace position in our conference is to bring about such a revival in the hearts and lives of our ministers. To too many of our ministers this teaching is not a vital matter. Though I have always been a conscientious objector, there was a period of time when I was a very shaky one.

> I undertook an independent study of the position for myself. This study proved most refreshing and soul enriching. After that I was ready to go and teach it to others. I have taught it more in recent years than ever before, just because I have become more convinced on this position."

This minister went on to say that he conducted mid-week discussions last winter for a group of 50 to 60 young people for a three month period. He used the Bible and a pamphlet by Theodore H. Epp entitled, "Should God's People Partake in War."

If ministers in our conference are once more committed to biblical nonresistance in more than a passive way, their convictions will be reflected in sermons and their concerns expressed in church council and committee meetings and in personal counseling. The drafting of their young men into military service will then no longer be considered a matter of pure individual preferance but will become a matter of deep prayerful concern to pastor, spiritual council and the entire congregation.

II. Training for Service

A second proposal for strengthening nonresistance in our conference is that a program be carefully planned and set up to train children for lives of dedicated Christian service. An integral part of this training must be a thorough program of training the mind, the spirit and the will for lives of positive Christian action. This program should begin in the primary grades and continue on through high school. The inner peace of God in the hearts of His disciples should be just as integral a truth taught to our children as are the principles of honesty and morality. From the earliest training, the child should be made to know that it is just as wrong to hate and fight as it is to cheat, and lie or be immoral. Every Christian child should be taught from the beginning that war is incompatible with Christianity. That war and fighting are sinful and no attempt should be made to justify them simply because a militarized society tries to justify them and all around him the child sees his playmates' fathers in uniforms and in military service. We cannot hope to develop strong peace conviction in our young people by remaining silent or mentioning it only now and then until adolescence when we hope to thoroughly instruct them in a few weeks of catechical class or a series of meetings with pre-draft age young men.

Children begin to see the conflict between Christ and Caesar at an early age and they begin to ask penetrating questions. Just the other day my six year old boy, Tommy, came running with a serious look wanting to know what a "conscientious projector" was. We may smile at first when we hear this misstatement, but upon reflection we see also that the lad unkowingly gave the term a twist from a negative to a positive connotation. The true child of God should always be a conscientious "projector". A projector of the Gospel of love, good will, and ultimately of the saving power of Christ. Our children need help in shaping their basic attitudes now, as well as ten years from now; they need it from sunday school teachers, preachers, playmates, as well as from parents.

Our conference must begin producing peace literature for children. The heroes of Christian children should be the great men of the church not the military generals and the political idols of the secular state. If and when

literature is produced it must of course be used. Ministers, Sunday school teachers and parents must assume responsibility for seeing that such literature is bought, read, and interpreted to children. Children must be taught early that the Christian's road may lead to ridicule, disdain, unpopularity, and possibly even persecution. The way of the cross is not always smooth and children should be made aware that Christianity may call for suffering, if not necessarily for themselves then possibly suffering to parents, brothers, neighbors, and friends who seek to live in obedience to Christ.

Youth is always looking for challenges; for something that is far-reaching and that demands courage. The full commitment to Christ in lives of unconditional surrender calls forth such courage. To practice nonresistance in a militarized state challenges the strongest. Let us train our children to think and act courageously in the realm of spreading good will. Let us be bold to show a sinful world that Christ has a better way than war and deceit and the cunning of diplomacy. Let us strike out on the new road and refuse to be taken in again by the appeal to power and warfare and the road that leads to disappointment, chaos, and hell.

III. Build Christian Communities

A third proposal I should like to advance in the interest of reviving the peace position in our conference is that we make a conscious effort to develop Christian communities. The church needs to be at the center of such efforts. Mennonites have been community builders. This is inevitable with the concept of the church as a body of believers, the gathered church or the communion of saints. Christian communities are badly needed in our fragmented society. Christians must recognize that an ever increasing share of modern man's life is spent outside the home. He is thus subject to a greatly multiplied number of social contacts and cultural influences. These contacts tend to shape his thoughts, his edeals and his social behavior. A strong Christian community is one of the most effective ways to combat secularism. I believe the facts justify one in saying that among Mennonites where community life was strong and solid; where the principle of nonconformity was alive, there the principle of nonresistance was also strong. Where our communities were secularized and socially and culturally fragmentized there the peace witness likewise was weak.

In his analysis of the draft status of men in World War II, Howard Charles has the following significant summary statement about the influence environment on draft status:

> Social influence is the most important single factor which was responsible for men going into military service. If we add the influence of the family and the school to that of the associates the social factor is responsible for more than 60% of the 3,300 choosing military service... This is a sobering comment on the influence of environment on Christian ideals and conduct. Of the more than 55% of all drafted men who chose to conform to the social pattern of society about them on the military issue, three out of five did so specifically for reasons of social expediency.[1]

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1. "A Presentation and Evaluation of MCC Draft Status Census" by Howard Charles Proceedings of Annual Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems, August 1945, p. 100.

Public high schools seem to be especially powerful in creating social pressures against conscientious objectors. Many Mennonite young men who have been trained in homes where nonresistance is taught, have nevertheless, forsaken it in fear of ridicule, condemnation, and social ostracism. There are inumerable cases where in spite of home and church influences in favor of nonresistance, Mennonite young men yielded to popular opinion and social pressures and accepted military service, often even against their own better judgment.

I am therefore proposing that we in the General Conference make every effort to build intentional communities. New one and old ones; communities whose members are dedicated to discipleship of Christ and his ethic of love as were such influential religious groups as the Friends of God in Germany during the 13th century and the Brethren of the Common Life in Holland in the 14th as well as the Anabaptists in the 16th. This is not suggesting a way of escape from all social responsibility. It is proposing a kind of collective retreat to higher ground in order that we might more effectively carry on a spiritual warfare against the "rulers of darkness" and the evils around us. It is suggested that the solidity of such communities would give members the needed strength and sense of moral and spiritual and economic support that all might have the courage to stand by their convictions and each one would be willing and able to accept the ridicule of the world because of the strong support from within the Christian community.

IV. Exercise Church Discipline

A final proposal that I should like to advance as a means of reviving the peace position in our conference is the adoption of a method of spiritual and social discipline. In the last analysis, this suggestion proposes to make the acceptance of military service a test of church membership. I am quite aware of the implications of what I am proposing, nevertheless I do so prayerfully and with a sense of Divine leading.

If our congregations are to be groups of voluntary believers of regenerated men and women in Christ, then the only effective way of adhering to standards is to have a measure of discipline. Denial of privileges or in extreme cases, deprival of membership is the only possible method of maintaining standards in a voluntary association. The group must define standards, and it must enforce them. The individual member dare not be given final authority to determine right and wrong or there can be no such thing as a stable orgnization. No organization can long maintain a principle if observance of that principle is left to the option of the individual. This is well illustrated in the case of nonresistance in Europe and in America. The Mennonites everywhere adhered to the principle at one time but wherever it was allowed to become a purely personal or individual matter rather than a group concern, the principle gradually but surely vanquished. In Americal the European pattern is being duplicated. Only in congregations and conferences where discipline is being exercised is the principle of nonresistance being maintained.

It is not going to be easy to begin disciplining. Church members who have never submitted to group discipline are likely to behave much the same way that a family of undisciplined children would behave if some authority suddenly tried to assert himself and establish order. Nevertheless, this I believe is necessary if nonresistance is again to be a widely held and cherished sacred truth in the General Conference. It would seem to me that the place to begin would be to develop conviction about the principle; next to define our group

objectives; this to be followed up by a vigorous program of teaching, preaching, and personal counseling. Each congregation might well follow Matthew 18:15-17 if and when it has come to the conviction that nonresistance is a Divine imperative.

Every effort should be made to have all members accept and understand the meaning of non-resistance as a vital Christian principle. Much personal work should be done with individuals who reject or are indifferent to the principle. If after repeated efforts the minister, the deacons, nor even the entire congregation succeed in "converting" a member to this point of view, he might well declare himself out of harmony and out of fellowship with the Mennonite Church. If he came to this conclusion he would withdraw, if not the congregation might decide to deny him the privileges of full membership and, in extreme cases, declare him out of fellowship or not in good church standing.

Note: This is a supplement to J.W. Fretz paper. Insert it as page D-137.
Actually this becomes part IV and "Exercise Church Discipline" part V.

A PROPHETIC PEACE OFFENSIVE

Those who claim to be committed to the Christian peace position must begin translating the better way of Christian love from words into work. Roland Bainton from Yale University recently reminded us that the Anabaptists tested their creeds by their deeds. We as General Conference Mennonites need to do much more thinking than we have thus far done on the social implications of our beloved Gospel. We need to hold many conferences and two and three-day institutes like this one. We need to do this in order to forge group convictions in areas of life and thought where we have been distressingly silent, or hopelessly vague or embarrassingly inconsistent.

The Old Testament prophets had messages for their own generation and for posterity on matters pertaining to political, economic and social questions. Jesus himself directed much of his teaching toward social and economic situations. We need to think together about the implications of nonresistance and the matter of industrial warfare, this includes labor unions and manufacturers associations and chambers of commerce. We need conferences on nonresistance and capital punishment. I have seldom, if ever, read or heard a statement by Mennonites in protest of executions of any kind. We need further discussion on how non-resistant Christians should act in the face of physical danger, revolution and warfare. How would we propose to face Communism and nihilistic Communists? Thus far we have given little thought and practically no training and disciplining of our members to face violence. In this matter Gandhi's disciplined followers in the face of conflict had something to teach Christians. He recognized that non-violent resistance might result in bloodshed and loss of life but infinitely less bloodshed than if Christians would offer armed might.

The essence of this point is that we must make nonresistance relevant to the problems of our society. Old and young will need to pray and plan for courses of action that are consistently Christian. In this matter a study conference on Christian vocation would be profitable and could help to clarify blind spots and inconsistent practices.

Christian simplicity, non-conformity, and nonresistance must be redefined in the light of the complex society in which we live.

TOWARD A REVIVED PEACE POSITION IN OUR CONFERENCE

Paul Roth

The assigned topic suggests that our Conference is not fully maintaining her historic Peace position. It further indicates that a revival of peace conviction is needed and calls for concrete suggestions leading to such a position.

There is a growing conviction in many Christian circles that war is contrary to the Spirit and teaching of Christ the Prince of Peace. Our heritage and belief that the New Testament is the Christians rule of faith and practice should place us in the forefront of those who renounce war as utterly foreign to the Spirit of Christ. To take any other position would at once place upon us the stamp of being subnormal Christians. If our present position is somewhat below New Testament standards, an examination of the necessary steps which must be taken in order to reach that position is certainly in order.

We need a revival of the Anabaptist vision. Our Anabaptist fathers were men with a vital faith and experience. God had spoken to them through His Spirit and Word. They knew by personal experience what it meant to be saved from sin. Pilgram Marpeck, an outstanding leader said; "We believe that one is made a child of God and free from the law and the bondage of sin only through such a faith by which the Spirit, as the power of God, lives in the heart and does His work."

Regeneration and the new life were inseparable in their thinking. In the words of Menno Simons: "This can never fail; where there is true Christian faith, there is also a dying to sin, a new creature, true repentance, a sincere, regenerated, unblamable Christian. True faith which avails before God, is a living and saving power which is, through the preaching of the Word, bestowed of God on the heart; moving, changing and regenerating it to newness of mind.. It destroys all ungodliness, all pride, unholy ambition and selfishness... Behold, such is the faith which the Scriptures teach us, and not a vain, dead, and unfruitful vision, as the world dreams."

Our fathers were regarded as heretics when they stated "that the Old Testament was done away and demanded New Testament backing for every Church ordinance and for the entire ethic of the Christian. For them the Scriptures were not a static unity, but an organic, a progressive and ever fuller revelation of God's being and will, which finds its goal and zenith in Jesus Christ. Pilgram Marpeck, Dirck Philips, Menno Simons and others made numerous statements regarding the necessity of New Testament support for one's ethic and practice.

The Church was considered a fellowship of committed disciples. Only those who had made a personal commitment to Christ were to be considered members of the Church.

They took the New Testament seriously and came to believe in love as a way of life. They proceeded to live by the Scriptures without engaging in philosophic discussions about their meaning. They asked no questions

about their practicality. To Menno Simons it was perfectly reasonable to ask: "How can a Christian according to the Scriptures, consistently retaliate, rebel, war, murder, slay, torture, steal, rob and burn cities and conquer countries?" We need a revival of the Anabaptist vision on these as well as other Christian teachings. A serious study of their position in the light of the New Testament will create this same faith in us. A revived peace position in our Conference is not possible without this vision.

We need to examine current theories, theology and attitudes which conflict with our historic faith. We need to recognize that vigorous, conservative "Fundamentalism" which has been fighting the battle of faith against unbelief, and against the trend away from evangelical faith, is a movement with little sympathy or respect for our peace position. Its theology is tinged with Calvinism and Dispensationalism. According to this school of thought "the Sermon on the Mount in its primary application gives neither the privilege nor the duty of the Christian." It will not be possible to move toward a revived peace conviction so long as many hold to this and similar ideas. It is not likely that ministers, writers and leaders of institutions will do much for the perpetuation of the faith so long as these sources inspire teaching and preaching. Neither can a minister drink from the fountains of Modernism and build the faith of our fathers.

We must learn to interpret the Old Testament Scriptures as Christ interpreted them in order to move toward a revived peace position. Six times in Matthew 5 Jesus quotes some Old Testament passage and says: "Ye have heard it said, But I say unto you." Whatever else it may mean, it does mean that Jesus claims His teaching supercedes the Old Testament. It does mean that Jesus now claims to give a clear, final interpretation of the Father's will and purpose for His children. We must begin with the New and interpret the Old in the light of it, for the higher revelation must throw light on the lower. One does not contradict the other but one "fills full" the other. The older is preparatory and provisional in relation to the new. Any other position in the interpretation of Scripture will result in Old Testament, subnormal Christianity.

The truth that God is love is the central teaching of Christ. He is the Shepherd that seeks His lost sheep until He finds it. He so loved man that He gave Himself in His unique Son that we might believe in Him and share His Life and Nature within. His Life and Nature go to work in our nature until every area of life is changed into His likeness by the Spirit. His Nature at work within makes it possible to see our erring brother or enemy as God sees them. This attitude would completely transform the brotherhood and society. When tempted to be critical of our fellowman let us try prayer, thanking God for him and asking that he be guided by the Spirit.

There is a sure way of overcoming the disquietude that comes from what people say and do. It is not advertised over the radio, and it has no price. In applying the remedy, put aside every thought of stopping or interfering with whatever or whoever irritates or upsets you. You are not undertaking to change the habits or reform the neighbors. In fact it is you and I who are to be changed. We are to attune ourselves to harmony and peace so that the thing of which we complain will lose its power to harm. Things and people do not affect us adversely because of what they do and are, as they do because of what we are not. When the mental and spiritual adjustment is made, we become conscious of harmony and peace. This in essence is what Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount.

Too often our opposition to war has been negative. We do not take up arms, we do not resist openly but we do boil inwardly over real or fancied wrongs. We are so much like the old Quaker lady, who when complimented by another for her composure under trying circumstances said, "I may appear calm on the outside, but within I am boiling." One of our distinctive teachings has often not been practised in personal, social and Church relations. The primary reference of Jesus' teaching was and is to personal relations. However we should not conclude therefrom that it is irrelevant to other areas of life. The basic hindrance to the practice of Christ's teaching is an unyielded self. "If anyone wants to follow in my footsteps he must give up all right to himself, take up his cross and follow me." (Phillips translation)

We need a personal and collective committal to the Anabaptist vision of life, brotherhood, discipleship and Christian relationships in human society. Christ was the ultimate Truth. They dared to face the question of Truth and found that Truth is not a doctrine but reality for had not Christ said, "I am the Truth?" Jesus is not the Truth because His teachings are true. His teachings are true because they express the Truth which He Himself is. He is more than His words or any word said about Him. Our fathers believed that we attain the Truth by doing it, by remaining in Him, for He said, "Abide in me, and I in you; and everyone who is of the Truth hears my voice."

Faith and life cannot be placed in separate compartments. If there is saving faith, if Christ really lives within, then He is at work in our nature, transforming life and character into a miniature Kingdom of God. Many socalled backward and uncultured people have no word in their language which distinguishes between "to believe" and "to obey." They reason- and rightly so - that these words should be one. "But if you believe, do you not obey? they say. "And if you obey, does that not show that you believe? This reasoning is perfectly valid.

There are many steps we could and should take toward a revived peace position. Producing better Sunday School and Bible School and Youth teaching material and literature is an important step that must be taken. We cannot hope to greatly strengthen our position by using materials in pulpit, Sunday School and home that have little or no sympathy with this position. However we must produce such materials before they can be used.

Our examining Committees must refuse to pass and our congregations must refrain from calling men to the pastorate who are not committed to this position. Our Church polity is congregational and our conferences are advisory. We also believe that Jesus taught this way of love and goodwill. We must find the way to preserve our independent Church life and at the same time conserve and revive this faith of our fathers.

We need to become aware of the social implications of the Gospel of Christ. Salvation is life- not only life which goes on for eternity, but life which begins now with its eternal qualities. As committed individuals we need to demonstrate this life in the professions, trades, in economic life, political science and in all the relationships of life. Ours must not be a withdrawal from life but an active participation in life in the Spirit of Christ. In our past history withdrawal led to stagnation, inner decay, low spirituality and dwindling numbers. May we learn history's lesson and apply it to our Church life today.

Let us eliminate the causes of war which have roots in individual attitudes and relationships. May each of us ask ourselves these and similar questions. Is this attitude in keeping with the example of Christ? Would Jesus approve of this business deal? Would Jesus repeat an unverified story about another? Am I dealing with another's weakness in the Spirit of Christ? Is spiritual pride parading under the cloak of loyalty to the word? When another makes an unkind remark or hurts my feelings would Christ retaliate or surrender the act or hurt in prayer and experience the power of love dissolving the unpleasant thing? Would Christ put Himself where He ceased to be under the control of the Holy Spirit? Would He justify evil means in order to secure good results? To ask them is to answer them. Reason may not provide for every eventuality, nor may we be able to decide the course we should follow in each instance in advance, but as committed individuals we can follow Jesus in His way of life. As we challenge our people and Churches with His way of life the revival we talk about will become an actuality.

[illegible] DISCUSSIONS

[illegible] Peace Study Conference

[illegible] 10 and 11, 1952

[illegible] were divided [illegible] Following [illegible] on, the [illegible] of [illegible]

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In reading these summaries some [illegible] decisions of agreement. The purpo[illegible] rislate but to study, to reach greate[illegible] possible to attain greater unity among [illegible] us may we be reminded tha[illegible]

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2. [illegible] summary is [illegible] and questions [illegible] not represe[illegible] each group.

Many significant questions [illegible] orded for further indivi[illegible]

Findings Committee:

[illegible]er [illegible], chairman [illegible]

[illegible]ard Shelly [illegible]

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

General Conference Peace Study Conference

April 10 and 11, 1953

The delegates were divided into four discussion groups and the visitors composed the fifth. Following presentation of the prepared papers of each half-day session, these groups met for an hour or more of frank discussion.

Recorders took notes for each group. These were digested, integrated into one report by one of the recorders, read to the group as a whole, and then edited by the Chairman for publication in this final report.

In reading these summaries some may be disappointed not to find concrete decisions of agreement. The purpose of this conference was however not to legislate but to study, to reach greater understanding, and as much as possible to attain greater unity among us as a General Conference body. Thus may we be reminded that:

1. Even though there was substantial agreement on much of what follows, rightfully none of the isolated statements can be quoted as conference thinking.

2. The summary is an effort to systematize significant statements and questions and does not represent the outline of discussion followed by each group.

3. Many significant questions were not discussed for lack of time but are recorded for further individual and group consideration.

E.M.E.

Findings Committee:

Elmer Neufeld, chairman	Ernst Harder
Maynard Shelly	Menno Schrag
David Habegger	Cornelius Dyck

Summary of discussions -- Friday morning

"THE GOSPEL AND NONRESISTANCE"

I. Definition of the Gospel:

A. The essence of the Gospel is Jesus Christ. Fragmentary definitions of the Gospel are inadequate.

B. We must interpret the "whole" Gospel in the light of the entire New Testament.

C. The gospel is the message of the cross. Although nonresistance may be regarded as a fruit of the gospel it is inherent in the gospel.

D. The "Good News" includes not only the facts of the life of Christ, but also the implication of his life for ours.

E. The Gospel is the message of the guiltless having died for the guilty, the one who is perfect having given himself for the unrighteous and unlovable. It centers around the person of Christ and his teachings.

F. There is more in the gospel than can be stated by a verbal definition.

G. Other questions:

1. Is the Gospel a way of life or a way to life.
   a. The way-to-life emphasis needs to come first--a Christian experience must begin with a divine encounter.
   b. On the other hand, certain experiences may lead to that divine encounter.
   c. The gospel is never only a way of life.
   d. Yet there is no faith without a working faith.

II. Definition of Nonresistance:

A. Nonresistance has negative and positive aspects--abstaining from evil and doing good. Or, as Erland Waltner has said, nonresistance is not only what a Christian does not do when he encounters evil, but also what a Christian does do when he encounters evil.

B. Nonresistance can be defined from the Gospel only by a study of its expression.

C. In being truly nonresistant we must seek to love as Christ loved. Yet man is different from God. Our love is to be God-like, yet agape includes wrath which we may not exercise.

1. Some say we should fight because of this aspect of love.

2. God's holiness does not contradict his love.

3. The church has no responsibility to punish criminals, yet we need to judge in cases of discipline.

4. Punishment is inherent in love.

5. Judgment and redemption are closely related--in the cross they were perfectly united.

D. Nonresistance must demonstrate love in all aspects of living, as well as in abstinence from war.

E. Other questions:

1. Are nonresistance and love distinctly separate terms or do they include each other?
    a. Love includes nonresistance.

2. Was historical Mennonite nonresistance passive? If so, why?
    a. Nonresistance tended to be passive as Mennonites were persecuted.
    b. Mennonites appeared to have little outlet for positive action in Russia.

3. Is there a positive Biblical word for nonresistance?

III. Inter-relatedness of the Gospel and nonresistance:

A. A fact is that many people have professed the Christian gospel, but have not only participated in war but even advocated war. Why is this the case?

1. Lack of a real religious experience.

2. Lack of teaching and information.

3. Misinterpretation of the leading of the Holy Spirit.

4. The absence of nonresistance constitutes a blind spot in much of the Christian Church.

5. Salvation is possible without receiving the whole truth.

6. Nonresistance is a test of salvation and discipleship, but not the only test.

B. Is nonresistance the root, fruit, or core of the Gospel?

1. No analogy gives the whole picture.

2. Love is at the center of the gospel--an essential fruit.

3. If God is love and Christ the center of our lives, then we are forced to the nonresistant position.

4. Nonresistance as a fruit of the gospel is the outer expression of the inner life.

5. Judgment and redemption are closely related--in the cross they were perfectly united.

C. Early Anabaptists revived the concept of a "covenant" church, over against the "confession" church, thereby putting the spotlight on discipleship.

D. The Gospel is an ideal which cannot be understood without some practical demonstration. The goal of every Christian should be Christ-likeness.

E. The strength of our nonresistant convictions is closely related to our full commitment to Christ and our appropriation of his enabling power. Nonresistance implies a constant personal companionship with Christ.

F. A double standard is unscriptural and incompatible with true Christianity. God is adverse to sin, irrespective of who knows it.

G. The teaching of Christian love can not be nullified by an edict of the state. A Christian is responsible for action taken even while under orders of the state.

H. The Gospel is focused in the cross and implies all that went before and after. It is like a spotlight which has a point of focus, but it covers a larger area.

I. Other questions:

1. Has an individual who professes Christ as Saviour but takes active part in war not then experienced genuine conversion?

2. Does nonresistance not then come automatically with salvation?
    a. Intensive, honest study of the Scriptures is necessary.

IV. Does the Old Testament Teach Nonresistance?

A. Christ and the New Testament gospel are the key to interpretation of the Old Testament.

B. Nonresistance, peace and love was God's original ideal for man.

C. Man fell from the true concept of God's will. Suffering and war in the Old Testament was a result of man's sin.

D. Through the Old Testament God was progressively revealing His will for man--after man's fall--until this culminated in the person of Christ.

E. Various Old Testament incidents, such as King David's disqualification for building the temple, indicate God's displeasure toward war and violence.

F. We must study further the question of nonresistance as seen from the Old Testament.

G. Other questions:

1. If wars in the Old Testament were fought under the "permissive" will of God, what precludes a similar situation today?

V. Reasons for so Great Disparity in Recognizing the Nonresistant Implications in the Christian Gospel:

A. Among General Conference Churches:

1. Failure to present nonresistance as part of the total gospel.

2. Accomodation to the larger society about us.

3. Neglect to draw proper lines between Christian and non-Christian vocations.

4. A shallow spiritual life.

5. Lack of teaching, seminars, study groups, etc., on this subject.

B. Among Protestant churches as a whole:

1. The Christian church has become too rationalistic.

2. A blind spot has been developed through years of negligence.

3. Most of the definitely nonresistant texts deal only with war by implication. They deal more directly with personal relations.

4. Most Christians agree that love is taught in the New Testament, but differ in the extent of its application.

5. As Mennonites we have a responsibility toward the whole of Christendom in the peace witness.

Summary of discussion -- Friday afternoon

"THE CHURCH AND WAR"

I. How has the nonresistance of the early Christian Church been lost?

A. Terminology as a factor:

1. Military terminology was not a basic reason for the loss of nonresistance, although there may be a danger of symbolism becoming the substitute for that which it portrays. Jesus used military terminology and Paul followed that example.

2. The biblical military metaphors are used by militarists to justify their position, but the metaphors probably did not contribute basically to their militarism.

3. It may be helpful to use the idioms of the day.

4. We should not use military metaphors which seem inconsistent with the spirit of our position.

B. Apocalypticism as a factor:

1. We need to distinquish between types of apocalypticism, as apocalypticism is a vital part of the Scriptures.

2. The early church had largely lost its apocalypticism by the time it became militaristic.

3. Apocalypticism can help preserve the nonresistant conviction as the individual looks to God, rather than man, for deliverance.

C. Reasons why the Church lost its nonresistance:

1. The assimilation of pagan elements.

2. The church became institutionalized.

3. The loss of a vital Christian faith.

4. The increase in material wealth.

D. Other questions:

1. Does the Bible in using military metaphors contradict itself when it sets forth the agape way of life?

2. Does criticism of military terminology and apocalypticism undermine the Bible as the Word of God?

3. Did the early Christians possibly refrain from military service simply because there was no conscript army?

II. How has the General Conference lost its nonresistant emphasis?

A. We have failed to adequately teach nonresistance. We still have but few materials for teaching--especially for children.

B. Our ministers have not adequately preached nonresistance, some being neutral on the subject and others indifferent.

C. The peace position has occasionally been equated with liberalism and even communism, thus repelling many conservative people.

D. Apocalypticism in its modern expressions has caused many to become militaristic.

E. We have concentrated on minor matters like that of dress and have not given much concern to the weightier sins of the spirit, such as jealousy, envy, and personal strife.

F. The example of nonresistant Christians has sometimes been negative and un-Christlike--taking the stand and not living up to it.

G. The owning of property by colleges, churches, mission boards and other institutions has made us tend to defend it with the sword or at least with conformity. Thus fear of loss has led us in a military direction.

H. Intense militaristic propaganda has influenced many in our ranks.

I. Militarism is often encouraged in young children when they are given guns, tanks, and other toys representing the military.

III. Is Christo-centric Biblicism what we need today?

A. Yes.

B. There are Biblicists who are not nonresistant, perhaps having approached the Bible with a preconceived idea.

C. Our people are illiterate doctrinally. The common person does not know what the Bible says about war.

D. Mennonites need to recognize the peace witness as a revelation of God.

IV. Do we actually accept the concept of a Believers' Church?

A. A "pure church" completely isolated from its culture and community decays from within.

B. Strict, coercive discipline encourages hypocrisy--that is, people take the I-0 position because of community pressure rather than spiritual conviction.

C. We cannot practice nonresistance without some isolation; we need to develop strong Christian community life.

D. We need to remain "separate" so that we have something to bring as witnesses. People ought to ask, "Why is he different?"

E. Accommodation to society may be a contribution to our cause by showing that many of its phases are not unchristian, if done in the right manner and spirit.

F. What we really practice is the concept of "a little church within the larger church". We depend upon the inner core working within the free group.

G. We need a peculiarity, not the kind that makes us odd, but that makes for leadership.

H. Other questions:

   1. Is the sect cycle inevitable or can we overcome it?

   2. Can we reverse the sect cycle? (No group in history has been known to do that.)

   3. Is it time to have a new reformation in our church to start another believer's church?

V. What should the conference say on war in view of the proportion of its members participating in the last war?

A. The pronouncement of a church should always be in the vanguard of its constituents--the church must keep Christian ideals before the people.

B. A statement of principle is not the lowest common denominator and therefore we ought not weaken the official position.

C. The failure is not in what is said, but in not saying enough.

D. An official statement is not of much value unless it is endorsed with an appropriate educational program.

E. Churches should be warned not to call ministers from outside of our conference who are unfavorable to our position.

F. We need to have all ministers living, preaching, and teaching the nonresistant gospel.

G. Churches calling a minister should ascertain his position on objection to military service, and if a minister already serving a conference church is known to have opposing views everything in the realm of love should be done to win him over to the nonresistant position.

VI. Should we employ discipline to maintain our position?

A. At this stage of departure from nonresistance most of our churches cannot use the discipline of excommunication.

B. We cannot discipline members who have not been taught.

C. "Legislation" is not the answer.

D. Discipline in today's situation must be exercised through guidance and teaching--adjustment will come.

E. Churches must have standards for believers, lest they be overwhelmed in sub-Christian practices.

F. The purpose of discipline is to redeem, to keep the church pure, and to honor God.

G. In sinning, the member puts himself out of the church--pray that he may return.

H. The scriptural guide in discipline is Matthew 18, but this can only be accomplished in a fellowship Church.

I. We must have organization. To be left without organization is to be close to anarchism.

VII. How can we win others to the nonresistant position?

A. Through evangelism.

B. By living Christ-like lives.

C. By producing literature for the use of others.

D. This is the work not only of the ministry but also of the laymen.

Summary of open discussion -- Friday evening

"THE DISCIPLE AS A CITIZEN"

I. Relationship of the Two Study Papers:

A. The definitions of the latter could be used to clarify the former.

B. Mast stated that his paper was primarily an attempt to meet the tendency toward withdrawal.

C. Janzen expressed the basic principle that our first loyalty is to God and that we have duties to the state only when they are compatible with this.

D. Perhaps the study papers grew out of different cultural backgrounds, the first American democracy and the second Russian totalitarianism.

II. The State as Both Good and Evil:

A. Accepting Brunner's view of the paradoxical nature of the state, where does it become demonic--where must the nonresistant Christian withdraw?

1. We must employ the broad principle of following Christ, and will then go in or come out of political situations as they permit or prohibit participation.

2. As one guidepost, it was suggested that no executive position in the higher levels of government could be held by a nonresistant Christian.

III. The Nonresistant Christian as the Government:

A. When Mennonites constitute the government, as in the Paraguayan colonies, what can be done with the wrongdoer? (Living in a democracy, we are actually a part of the state.)

1. Ought the state then accept the sin of the wrongdoer, with the colony leaders "being whipped" rather than "whipping?"

2. Must we always have an "outside" group to punish the evildoer, and therefore be careful lest we convert everybody and have no such group?

3. Why can not the Christian administer in love a limited amount of punishment as a parent does in dealing with a child?

4. It is important to note that there are no criminals in the Paraguayan colonies and that there are relatively few cases of discipline.
   a. Crimes are usually committed in an impersonal society.

5. What happens when the offender in a Christian colony is not a Christian, or perhaps even from outside the colony?

IV. Christian Responsibility in the State:

A. Is the person with an obsolute ethic disqualified from any participation in the state?

B. How can a Christian avoid contributing to corruption if he withdraws from the state?

C. Withdrawal from an office does not remove from the withdrawer the guilt of that office.

   1. For many situations the dilemma must be solved by finding a force of love compatible with Christianity.

   2. We must remove ourselves as far from the guilt as possible.

D. May we claim rights in the State when we have renounced our responsibilities?

E. Perhaps all areas of living involve some compromise--yet, essentially we must withdraw rather than compromise.

   1. In business we appear to be less concerned about compromise than in politics.

F. A further observation was made on the corruptness of the military system in America and the moral question of paying taxes contributing toward such a system.

V. Questions for Further Study:

A. What is the Scriptural concept of the state?

B. Practically speaking--in what areas, levels, or branches of government might a nonresistant Christian participate?

C. Is it right to support another in a position which appears reprehensible to the true disciple?

D. If we do not practice an obsolute ethic in the more personal areas of life, such as business, have we the right to withdraw from government because it may involve occasional compromise?

Summary of discussion -- Saturday morning

"THE NON-COMBATANT POSITION IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURES AND THE CIVILIAN ALTERNATIVE"

I. Government and the Use of Force:

  A. What was Paul's concept of the State?

    1. Paul thought of God as working through government--he held a high view of the state.

    2. Did Paul hold a higher and loftier view of the state than did the gospel writers?

    3. Was Paul's view of the state a carry-over from the Old Testament?

    4. Did Paul integrate his nonresistant convictions with his view of the government?

    5. Paul approved of the government and did not separate himself from it. In certain instances it benefited the spread of the gospel.

  B. Does the government as envisioned in Romans 13:4, when engaged in war and other acts of violence, necessarily operate under the sanction and will of God?

  C. As Mennonites we tend to view government and force as indispensable to, and only to, a sub-Christian order--our view borders on Anarchism.

    1. Our Mennonite theology is better suited to an autocratic and persecuting government than to a democracy.

  D. Jesus did not lead a political revolution. The disciples did not become insurrectionists. They were subject to the government.

    1. There may be a difference between being subject and being obedient to the government.

  E. We do not give tacit assent to the use of force or other evil acts of our government, simply by being a citizen of this country.

  F. The alien who is recognized as a conscientious objector and wishes to become a citizen of this country is not required to take an oath of allegiance containing a promise to bear arms.

  G. Physical force in violent form can hardly be regarded as amoral--the use of force is a moral question.

    1. If force as used in war is not regarded as inherently wrong, then we have little more than a doctrine of just and unjust wars.

  H. We ought to have more concern about the use of force in the treatment of criminals by our government.

1. The penal institutions of this country can hardly be considered redemptive.

2. We do little in protesting capital punishment.

I. Does the government have a right to conscript?

1. In a democracy we can conscript ourselves--the purpose for which one is conscripted determines whether it is right or wrong.

II. Participation in Military Service in Past Experience:

A. The use of force for protection by the Mennonites in South Russia was morally wrong and impractical.

1. Those who actively defended themselves fared worse than those who did not--reprisals were worse. Those who did not resist suffered only a few losses.

2. Ultimately the issue is whether it was right and not whether it worked?

B. The Danzig conference recognized the I-A-0 position in Europe with reluctance. Now they are full militaristic. The Mennonites in Holland followed the same trend.

C. It appears, generally speaking, that acceptance of non-combatant service has been part of a trend toward acceptance of full military service, although in individual cases, experience in noncombatant service has led registrants to the I-0 position.

III. The Non-Combatant Position:

A. A rationale for the non-combatant position is the argument that to a greater or lesser extent we are all involved in a war effort and that we accept benefits derived from our government and war.

B. There is a matter of degree in participation in war, and we should participate as little as possible.

C. A high service motive and a decent Christian life on the part of the I-A-0 do not constitute a justification of his position.

D. Jesus associated actively with people who were sinners, but that does not justify or imply affiliation with them in an evil program.

E. There appears to be a more clear-cut basis for distinction between the I-0 and the I-A-0 positions than between the I-A-0 and I-A.

F. Participation in non-combatant service has not increased the effectiveness of our peace witness. Men taking this position have made little contribution to the peace witness of our church.

G. Participation in noncombatant military service has shown that meeting the military half way is dangerous, complex, and difficult. The

noncombatant tends to find himself identified with the Army and its purposes, both by others and himself.

H. Need was expressed for a thorough study of Mennonite participation in the medical corps in Russia and in Canada, in comparison to medical corps service in the U.S. Army.

   1. According to the U.S. Army Field Manual, "The primary duty of medical troops as of all other troops is to contribute their utmost to the success of the command of which the medical service is a part."

   2. The non-combatant in the Army must go through the basic training program designed for the regular, except for that part which is concerned with the "study, use, or handling of arms or weapons."

I. As followers of Christ, we can have no part in militarism.

IV. The Civilian Work Program as an Alternative:

A. The present program has greater potentials and also greater dangers than the Civilian Public Service program of World War II.

B. A basic criticism of the civilian work program is the lack of sacrifice equivalent to that required of men in the Armed Forces--it is too easy. We must not be content with merely an escape from military service.

   1. The Canadian alternative service work appears to have been less creative than CPS in the States.

   2. The Army does not wish to glamorize the CO position and therefore does not always allow opportunity for significant service.

C. How might the civilian work program become more significant and more challenging?

   1. Perhaps more men should be encouraged to enter MCC or other church service-- relatively few are doing so. Foreign relief projects appear to have a unique service possibility.
      a. This would require more giving on the part of the churches.
      b. Older men must sacrifice more to keep pace with younger men and make possible the younger man's service--this will help young people to make correct decisions.

   2. We must attempt to make all areas of I-W service a "plus" service. The first mile service in I-W is compulsory, but second mile service should be performed and encouraged--on the job and off the job.
      a. The church holds a real responsibility for those who are serving with state institutions.
      b. Healing the sick--ministering to the total individual--is a valid Christian ministry for I-W service.

D. A measure of disillusionment and a taste of the menial frequently accompanies even that which is pictured as dramatic service.

E. Though the civilian work program does not demand sacrifice equivalent to the military, we must make the choice because the other is wrong--and then do the best we can.

   1. We should not overemphasize the significance of projects but rather emphasize the ideal and convictions for which we stand.

F. For I-W work to realize its greatest potential, it needs to make a contribution in the realm of the spiritual--we must evangelize and bring others to Christ.

G. We need cleaner lives and an end to pleasure-madness among Christians.

   1. If the FBI expects a consistent life on the part of a conscientious objector, the minister should also.

   2. Even if a man has not always been consistent in his Christian life, we should not counsel him to participate in further wrong and enter the Army.

V. Our Official Peace Position and Its Implementation:

A. Should we modify our official position to include the non-combatant?

   1. No, we should give official sanction only to the I-0 position, that which we believe to be right.

   2. The church has an interest in the individual, but also a responsibility toward the group. Modifying our position for the individual may weaken the position of the group.

   3. Not recognizing the I-A-0 is unrealistic.

   4. The I-A-0 should be recognized as a conscientious objector stand, although inadequate. It should not be given consideration equal with the I-0.

   5. The General Conference should reaffirm its stand on the I-0 position but should also put on record its attitude toward men in classifications I-A and I-A-0 and in the absolutist position.

B. How can we as a conference allow for so much variance in the position on conscientious objection to war? Recognition of all conscientious positions under Selective Service would destroy the concept of a fellowship church.

   1. What is the basis of our fellowship: Is it freedom of conscience? Is it the common recognition of Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of man? Is it a unity in the knowledge of common discipleship?

   2. Any pronouncement by the conference can at best be only an ideal held before our churches. The difficulty in bridging the gap between conference leadership and actual situations in local churches lies in the fact that the General Conference is basically not a

church but an association of churches, an association with only advisory capacity.

3. To strengthen and clarify our conception of the church there is need for a seminar on this problem.

C. Should conference churches ordain a minister and should the Mission Board send out a missionary who does not hold to the nonresistant position?

1. We can not legislate on this point for the individual church.

2. All conference leaders should be convinced in this position.

D. Our attitude toward the person who takes non-combatant service.

1. We need to develop a better understanding of the non-combatant and his thinking.

2. A term not to be used or implied is "kick out" of the church.

3. If we initiate discipline, it should be with everyone, rather than only with those transgressing the peace stand-- our own lives need greater discipline.

4. We must treat the sincere conscience.

5. The attitude of the churches should be one of greater concern in the areas of directive discipline (implying training and education) and redemptive discipline (implying suffering love).
   a. We need to do a lot of teaching before we do much legislating.

6. We should regard as not in good standing or at least teach with exhortation and rebuke those entering military service.
   a. What does this mean in terms of the right to vote, to partake of the Lord's Supper, to teach Sunday School class, to hold church office, etc.?

E. Scripture unequivocally teaches the sinfulness of killing. Therefore there is something inconsistent and cowardly if churches discipline on other matters and take no definite action on this violation.

1. Can a born-again Christian be considered totally sincere in the I-A position?

VI. Other Observations:

A. The nonresistant position is basically a personal position and must be grounded on a personal commitment to Christ. Other reasons are secondary and represent some of our weaknesses.
   1. Nonresistance must be kept within the context of the full message of the Gospel.

B. Findings from this conference might well be presented to the General Conference to stimulate concern for the problem on a broader basis. Perhaps some of the papers could be read at the General Conference.

C. We can come to a firmer position only through a filling of the Holy Spirit.

Summary of discussion -- Saturday afternoon

"TOWARD A REVIVED PEACE POSITION IN OUR CONFERENCE"

I. Preaching, Teaching, and Personal Witnessing in Reviving the Peace Position:

A. The teaching and preaching of nonresistance should be approached with a positive emphasis.

1. Other denominations are recognizing and accepting the Peace Position.

2. Nonresistance is inherently Biblical.

3. Continually additional individuals are adopting nonresistant convictions.

B. The current status of the peace position in our conference should be regarded as a serious crisis.

1. We must expect new light to break forth from unexpected places in the face of denial. On our mission fields such light is being seen.

2. Ours is not a lost cause. The horizon of the Mennonite Peace witness has been darkened by clouds at various times in the past. We ought neither to be discouraged or comforted, but challenged.

3. We must take a stand for the centrality of love in the New Testament and live accordingly.

C. What can the committed minister do to revive the peace position in congregations where it is not accepted?

1. He can and will witness to his conviction, although it may need to be done gradually--ministers must be more concerned about approval from God than from their congregations.

2. He can introduce groups of young people to nonresistance by taking them to district or other meetings where the peace position is emphasized.

3. He can invite outside speakers to emphasize and interpret this position.

4. In informal study groups--mid-week meetings--the minister can guide interested people in a re-examination of the Mennonite Faith.

5. The committed minister should try definitely to make an impact on Sunday School teachers and other key people.

D. How can we help the minister who does not accept the Peace Position?

1. Brotherly concern and interest in such minister's position needs to be expressed by others. This might be done on the district

level, officially or semi-officially, by a visiting team of two who are concerned.

2. Follow-up Peace Study Conferences should be planned for the district level--on an inclusive rather than restricted basis.

E. Other means of reviving the Peace Position:

1. Individual Sunday School classes might study peace and Mennonite Witness for a quarter.

2. A course on Mennonite history might profitably follow baptism for the catechism class.

3. Prayer.

II. Discipline in Reviving the Peace Position:

A. Discipline is the art of being a disciple, a genuine follower. Group discipline requires members to conform to group standards--adherence to the thinking and convictions of the group.

1. Discipline is based on the teaching of Jesus and is actually not a question of requiring conformity to our personal standards--the rule is the standard of Christ.

2. A discipline which emphasizes rules and regulations is contrary to Jesus. He concentrated on the spirit of life.
   a. What is the place of Matthew 18: 17-18?

3. In order to be effectively disciplined, the individual himself must be conscious of guilt.

B. The primary purpose of discipline is to win and redeem rather than to penalize--correction not punishment. Discipline should seek to educate and rehabilitate.

1. Exclusion from the group is the final step in the attempt to preserve a believer's Church, but this must be preceeded by a loving attempt to win the erring brother--guidance prior to exclusion.

C. Discipline must have its roots in early Christian nurture, teaching in the home, teaching in the Sunday School, preaching of the Peace Position in the church, etc.

D. Discipline must apply to every area of Christian living for every member--it must be a total approach.

E. There is a point where the church must "lay down the law." The difficulty is in determining that point.

1. Is there anything worse than killing--sending an unredeemed one into eternity?

F. The church must command respect in the eyes of its members, so that the persons violating the Peace Position are gravely conscious of sinning not only against Christ but also against the Church. If discipline is to be effective, the disciplinarian must be respected.

  1. When joining the Church, the individual promises to respect and obey its teachings. Therefore members can be expected to follow these teachings.

  2. The fellowship to which one belongs is a screen for his actions.

G. Discipline is not to be enforced by the minister alone, or by the church board, but by the entire church in humble obedience to God.

  1. Discipline must be exercised in an attitude of prayerful humility--never in an attitude of revenge.

  2. Responsible church leaders should have a higher status and be respected more--we should especially elevate the concept of deacons as spiritual assistants.

H. Discipline, to be effective, must be inner discipline, an inner surrender to Christ on the part of all, followed by loyalty to the Church.

I. One of the most effective forms of discipline may simply be a discussion of the problem, evidencing concern.

J. Further problems arising out of the discussion on discipline.

  1. Can the church take the prerogative of personal decision from the individual, when our historical position has always emphasized strong personal responsibility and individualism?

  2. Should we not avoid drawing a narrow circle of church membership which excludes many who because of guilty consciences can be won only through love and not by exclusion? Our purpose, in this area, is to prevent killing.

  3. Church members often revolt against strict church discipline.

  4. Should we not spend less time on internal discipline, and concentrate more on witnessing to the world outside the church--letting our lights shine?

  5. The lack of discipline leads to the use of Sunday School teachers and leaders in our churches who do not hold the Peace Position and relay their negative influence, especially to youth.

III. Service and Vocation as Means of Reviving the Peace Position:

A. We need to underscore the Peace Position by teaching, preaching, and living lives of service.

  1. Youth should be encouraged to give at least a year of service.

        a. Parents need to encourage their children to enter voluntary service and discourage their becoming too deeply involved in farming or other business until they have served.

    2. A unique service opportunity is afforded by the Mennonite Central Committee, in PAX Service, Voluntary Service, Mental Health, etc.

    3. There are opportunities for service in our conference institutions.

    4. Government Civil Service affords a worthwhile service opportunity--nurses and teachers may be able to secure positions on reservations where we have missions.

    5. Local churches can organize units to aid in time of disaster--beginning the peace witness in Jerusalem.

    6. All our service needs to be motivated by the thought of leading people to Christ.

B. Our choices of vocations need to be made with the conviction that all of a Christian's effort must be directed to the glory of God.

    1. Some vocations are immoral and should not be accepted by the Christian. They are the ones that undermine the faith and contribute to the destruction of life and property.

    2. We should be willing to take a job at less pay if we see it as a field of service.

C. We must reemphasize the importance of building Christian communities, even in urban areas--communities attractive to our common interests, without isolation. The church should be the center of all our life.

    1. Groups of young families should be encouraged to establish themselves in new communities with the purpose of establishing churches and witnessing to the community.

    2. Groups of I-W men will probably want to stay in the communities where they are stationed as they are becoming a part of the community. They should be encouraged to form churches now while they have large numbers of men, to provide an outlet for a Christian witness.

IV. Study Conferences in Other Areas of Our Christian Faith and Life (In light of the gratifying experiences at this peace study conference, one discussion group suggested that the following other areas of church life should receive similar attention):

A. It is suggested that the Executive Committee of the General Conference sponsor a study conference on the subject "Our General Conference Concept of the Church of Jesus Christ."

    1. Our concept of the Church is conditioned by our beliefs regarding its basis, such as salvation, freedom of conscience, discipleship, etc.
        a. What place is given to discipleship in our concept of the Church?

    b. What is the relationship of the local congregation to the Church of Jesus Christ?
    c. What is the relationship of our conference to the Church of Jesus Christ, and to the local congregation?
    d. In keeping with our concept of the Church, how do we revive those aspects of our faith, which have been all but lost?

  2. Is our present General Conference Church still true to the Anabaptist concept of a fellowship of the redeemed living in common discipleship to the Lord Jesus Christ?

B. The Board of Trustees and Finance might profitably sponsor a study conference on Stewardship.

C. It is suggested that the Board of Missions sponsor a study conference on Lay Evangelism.

D. The Board of Publication and Education might sponsor study conferences giving consideration to the following areas:

  1. A study of our doctrine regarding children in the Kingdom of God--children's literature and child evangelism.

  2. Means of encouraging creative writing through contests, college courses, etc.

  3. Availability of literature written for Mennonites or suitable to our purposes; the use and availability of slides and other visual education materials; and the possible use of radio and television, two modern means of communication which appeal strongly for our time and attention.

  4. Mennonite theology in relation to dispensationalism and other recent influences.

  5. Christian Family Life.

  6. Our academies and colleges in strengthening the Christian Life of the conference.

E. The Board of Christian Service should be encouraged to sponsor in the near future additional peace study conferences in the other districts, open to the public. In addition, the following areas should be studied:

  1. Material aid and community building.

  2. Enlarged use of retreats for our young people.

  3. Civilian defense and the nonresistant Christian.

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Eden Church
Moundridge, Kansas, April 10-11, 1953

Greetings to all Congregations of the General Conference:

As delegates of various district conferences and as guests, we are assembled here at Eden as a Peace Study Conference in response to the invitation of the Board of Christian Service to re-examine the relationship of the Gospel and the Church to war, and to review the historic peace testimony of our fellowship.

As this study progressed, we were reminded again and again that the doctrine of love and nonresistance is of Christ, our Lord and Saviour, and not of man's making. Thus we were led, by the indwelling Spirit of the living God, to re-affirm the Conference Declaration of Souderton and Freeman, which declared:

> "We believe that war is altogether contrary to the teaching and spirit of Christ and the Gospel; that war is sin.... Therefore, if we profess the principles of peace and nevertheless engage in warfare and strife, we as Christians become guilty of sin and fall under the condemnation of Christ the righteous Judge."

We do rejoice in the witness which was given in the past war, the rich inter-Mennonite fellowship, the hundreds of people reached outside our group, the new projects stimulated such as voluntary service and mental hospitals, and the opening of mission fields in Gulfport and elsewhere, and the revived interest in this doctrine both within our church and in other denominations.

We humbly confess, our inadequacies both in understanding and living a full life of love and nonresistance. Moreover we are aware of the gap between Conference position and Conference practice. We have not always moved forward in a vigorous and positive witness, and have not adequately taught our young people, with the result that many of them entered the armed forces.

Therefore, we call upon you, to help re-examine and strengthen our peace position. We believe that by making an unqualified commitment of [illegible] Christ, a genuine searching of the Scriptures, an early training [illegible] the building of churches as consecrated brotherhoods [illegible], the development of Christian communities with [illegible] living, the move towards redemptive Church discipline, [illegible] teaching and healing, that there will [illegible] and nonresistance in our fellowship. [illegible] in this endeavor, is our prayer.

MESSAGE TO OUR CONGREGATIONS

From the General Conference Peace Study Conference

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Therefore, we call upon you, to help re-examine and strengthen our peace position. We believe that by making an unqualified commitment of allegiance to Christ, a genuine searching of the Scriptures, an early training of our children, the building of churches as consecrated brotherhoods who love their Christ, the development of Christian communities with spiritual patterns of living, the move towards redemptive Church discipline, and a mighty thrust of preaching, teaching and healing, that these will help to revive the doctrine of love and non-resistance in our fellowship. May God lead and bless us in this endeavor, is our prayer.

From the delegates and representatives of district conferences of the General Conference Mennonite Church, at a special meeting near Moundridge, Kansas, April 10 - 11, 1953:

The Conference Message To Christian Churches

I.

As General Conference Mennonites we feel deeply penitent for our own weakness in the light of our glorious heritage in the Lordship of Christ as re-discovered in Switzerland, Holland, Germany, and Russia many years ago. Our people know the meaning of persecution, displacement and martyrdom, yet we have faltered at the very moment when our governments in the United States and Canada have best understood our desire to serve the nation without violation of conscience.

II.

Yet, we are here assembled to rejoice in the faith, hope and love which we possess through the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

We rejoice in the basic clarity regarding the ultimate issue of authority -- that there is one who is our Lord and Saviour; that we can give Him, and Him alone, our absolute allegiance and supreme loyalty. And that to give this to anyone else or anything else is a modern form of idolatry.

We rejoice in the grace of God which makes us new creatures in Christ, and, that through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit we may live the life of holy obedience and discipleship.

We rejoice both in the mercy of Christ and the disturbing example of Christ, challenging all of the anti-Christian patterns of living in us and in our institutions. We are confident that our Lord will never give us peace in our denial of Him.

We rejoice that love is at the very core of the Gospel and would recall the church universal to a deeper knowledge of this truth.

We rejoice that this love was God's reason for sending His Son. And that this love is supremely revealed in the broken body and shed blood on the Cross where sin was decisively met in vicarious suffering. Flowing from this Cross and the life which led up to it is the basis for our relation to our neighbor and our enemy. It is also the clue for our escape from self-centeredness, and is the basic method for dealing with evildoers and with our inner-circle relationships.

We rejoice that we are still held by the vision of the church as a suffering brotherhood, a fellowship in which the fulness of Christ's reign must be practiced, in which the redeemed meet every human need and from which they go forth to serve, save and heal.

We rejoice that increasingly Christian service is winning young people to the tasks of the missionary and the Good Samaritan. We pray that God will continue to use us throughout the world as healers, helpers and reconcilors in the name of Christ.

III.

To our governments in Washington and Ottawa we express thanks for the recognition of freedom for minorities. We pledge intercession on their behalf, lives of economic usefulness, moral integrity and cultural creativity.

To our governments we would heraldthe fact of the Kingdom of God, both here and coming, whose absolutes of Christian discipleship and love we must follow at all costs. We point with alarm to totalitation governments which ruthlessly suppress groups who keep alive these evangelical truths. We also point with alarm to the coroding effects of Universal Military training on the cultures of Europe from which we have come and which looms as a threat here. We confess our guilt in the development of totalitarian trends which can only grow in the soil of spiritual emptiness.

To the churches of Christendom we affirm that the continuing fact of a witness against war in almost all communions is the living Lord of the church pleading for a break with war in the Body of Christ. The church cannot have one hand on the Bible and one on the Sword. Today it must take its hand off the Sword, abandon the theories of the just war and of the lesser evil and, through the grace of God, summon its members to a ministry of forgiveness, suffering love and trusting faith. The hellish fires of the atomic and hydrogen bombs force the issue between Christ and Anti-Christ.

IV.

To both church and state we declare that paralyzing pessimism should not be the order of the day since God has decisively spoken in the Lord Jesus Christ. A wonderful love is now available in Christ and among the people of Christ. This is a unique, all-powerful fact by which history must be measured. To ignore this fact is to court judgment and death.

As we meet in the countryside of the Kansas wheat belt it seems clear that the simple Christian call is to open the Bible and study it together; to see Jesus towering o'er the wrecks of time, to unite the church in the ministry of reconciliation and to proclaim the Good News of forgiving and serving love.

To people in ignorance, disease, starvation, war, empty secularism and crass materialism, we must go to proclaim, explain and live the Gospel.

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ccepted the following from the "Visitors" discussion group:

a) Before leaving these meetings we, the visitors, want to express our appreciation to the Board of Christian Service for their invitation to these sessions. It has been a real privilege to share in the study and fellowship of these days and a blessing to us all.

b) In view of the blessings received from the study and fellowship of this Conference we, the visitors, urge the Board of Christian Service to encourage conferences such as these on the district conference level, these meetings to be open to the public.

Agreed to forward to the Executive Committee of the General Conference the suggestion for further study conferences in other aspects of our conference life. (See page B-19)

Minutes of Action Taken

April 11, 1953, by the delegates and guests gathered at the Eden Conference:

1. Adopted the "Message to Our Congregations" giving the Statement Committee freedom to incorporate suggestions and make editorial changes.

2. Adopted the "Message to the Christian Churches".

3. Agreed to have the "Message to the Christian Churches" also sent to proper representatives in Washington and Ottawa.

4. Accepted the following from the "visitors" discussion group:

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DUO-TANG
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MADE IN U.S.A.